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# INDIA : A SYNTHESIS OF CULTURES

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Kewal Motwani

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To  
<sup>1871</sup>  
CLARA

A LOVING AND LOYAL COMRADE  
AN EXQUISITE EMBODIMENT OF SYNTHESIS OF THE  
BEST OF THE EAST AND THE WEST  
WHOSE  
TOIL AND HOPES AND FEARS OF MANY YEARS  
HAVE BEEN HER SHARE OF  
SERVICE OF HER ADOPTED MOTHERLAND



## PREFACE

THE following pages represent the material that was used in the course of lectures, delivered in America, Japan and India. I had the pleasure and privilege of completing three nation-wide tours in the United States of America between 1932 and 1936, lecturing before over sixty leading Universities and colleges and numerous cultural and business organizations, and also before several universities in Japan. These tours were arranged with the assistance of my teachers and friends, Professor Benjamin F. Shambaugh, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, Professor Edwin D. Starbuck, Chairman of the Department of Philosophy, both of my *alma mater*, the State University of Iowa, and of Dr. Walter A. Jessup, President of the University, and later of the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, New York.

Chapter 1 states the problem confronting India and indicates the purpose of the volume. Chapters 2 and 3 are the outcome of the lectures mentioned above. The material was considerably expanded and used for a series of twenty-four lectures, under the general heading of Social Ethics, to a class in a Post-Graduate School of Social Welfare in India, during 1943-44, to serve as an introduction to a subsequent series on National Planning. Chapter 4 represents series of three lectures delivered on

Kinkhede Foundation to Nagpur University in September, 1946. This chapter is an elaboration of an article that was published seven years ago as well as fulfilment of a hope expressed therein.<sup>1</sup> My thanks are due to Nagpur University authorities for permission to incorporate these lectures in this volume.<sup>2</sup> The last chapter is an invitation to the study of the science of national planning and of the techniques of solving some of the problems confronting this country. The chapter contains more or less shorthand notes of three courses on National Planning, Criminology and Juvenile Delinquency that were also offered at the above-mentioned School. The manuscript was completed in August, 1945, but the publication has been delayed due to many unavoidable circumstances.

Planning is both a science and an art. Its foundations lie in the development of a synthetic vision that enables one to have foresight, hindsight and insight. This vision of the whole is one of the contributions of the Science of Sociology, which is modern version of the Dharma Shastra of the Hindus. A general, wide-spread appreciation of this technique of looking at life, both by the masses and more specially by the leaders of the nation, is a matter of vital urgency for our country. As I wrote ten years ago : " Sociology is a science of social causation and social synthesis. . . . In these days, when India has been put on the highway of the world's cultural commerce, there

<sup>1</sup> Motwani, Kewal, " Sociology," *University of Madras Journal*, July, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> These lectures will be published in a separate volume by Nagpur University.

is need for a planned conscious social change and adaptation. We must learn to feel the trend of our individual and national destinies ; we must know how to use science to secure objectivity and some amount of certainty, or else we shall continue to flounder in the morass of futilities, as we are doing now, perpetuating outworn institutions, supporting lost causes, wasting our national energies and enthusiasms. I am convinced that an intense study of this subject will help us considerably in planning our policies and programmes and producing intelligent citizens for the new era that is opening before us.”<sup>1</sup>

The atomistic, analytical type of education that emphasises specialization and trains us to think in a straight line, like a horse in blinkers, forced on us by the highly individualistic nation of the West, has crushed out of us all capacity for integrative thought, for a vision of the whole, and there are few people in our country who can claim to be qualified for the task of national planning. As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said the other day, “ With all respect to those who use the word planning frequently enough—even members of the Planning Departments and the like—I would like to say that most of them have not the remotest conception of what planning means. Each person moving in a little circle is not planning. Planning is conception of the whole and developing each aspect of the whole in relation to other parts. You have first to consider the basic things on which the rest of the super-

<sup>1</sup> Motwani, Kewal, *Sociology : A Brief Outline* vii-viii, 1937.



structure may be built.”<sup>1</sup> The Provincial Governments are confronted with the same problem. As a recent report has it, “The paucity of suitable officers to take charge of nation-building department, that will be springing up shortly as a sequel to Government’s post-war development plans, is causing anxiety to the United Provinces Government, it is reliably learnt. Stamina and aptitude for constructive work more than seniority in age are understood to be the criteria of suitability for service in the new Department.”<sup>2</sup> And as though this was not enough, Mr. John Matthai, now a member of the Interim Government, has added his quota. Speaking at the foundation-stone laying ceremony of the National Physical Laboratory by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, at Delhi, on January 4, 1947, Mr. Matthai said : “ More and more, as I study the situation it seems to me that the real limiting factor of our plans of economic development is not finance. My own idea is that the real reason why it is difficult to put these plans into execution is there are not enough personnel of the right quality in the country who can work out our plans to the last stage so that they may be put straightaway into execution. The real limiting factor is going to be the personnel available for the work. It is an interesting and

<sup>1</sup> Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal, in an address at the time of opening the exhibition of Irrigation and Engineering Research, organized by the Central Advisory Board of Irrigation, Government of India, reported in *Free Press*, Bombay, Thursday, November 28, 1946.

<sup>2</sup> A telegram from Lucknow correspondent of *The Hindusthan Times*, New Delhi, December 24, 1946.

significant fact that although the Government of India have placed substantial funds at the disposal of various agencies in the country for the formulation and execution of plans, so far on the whole only a relatively small part of the grants placed by Government at their disposal have been spent.”<sup>1</sup>

This is a serious confession from a man who is reported to have been the chief draftsman of the much propagandised “Bombay Plan” put out by a few capitalists. There is, however, one redeeming feature of this deplorable situation, and that is that we have begun to realize that it is comparatively an easy task to sit in an air-conditioned room of a tall building and weave cobwebs of economic abstractions and juggle with figures, but quite a different thing to command personnel that can be depended upon for carrying out the plans of national welfare. Never has a nation, of such tremendous potentialities entered upon the responsibility of reconstructing her life in terms of her national ethos and world forces in such an ill-equipped manner as India. Britain, which has lived its life of geographical and intellectual insularity and ignorance, kept India tied to its apron-strings, and it will require herculean efforts on the part of the leaders of this country to break away from this intellectual thrall and strike out on their own, drawing on the nation’s experience as well as on the achievements and experience of the nations of the West. We are running a race with time. Some of the ways in which this sorry state

<sup>1</sup> *Times of India*, Bombay, January 5, 1947.

of affairs can be remedied have been indicated in a recent publication, and they will bear repetition here.

*First*, we should introduce Sociology forthwith in our high schools, colleges and universities, so that we shall have adequate number of youngmen and women who can be depended upon for intelligent execution of the schemes of national planning throughout the country and assume the task of leadership in our rural areas. *Second*, we should co-ordinate various Departments of Social Sciences in our Universities into Schools of Social Sciences, so that our teachers can learn the art of collective and co-ordinated thinking and impart it to their students. *Third*, we should bring the various Learned Societies of our country into one central organization, an Indian Academy of Social Sciences, so that they will be able to pool their resources of scholarship and research and give scientific aid in the solution of some of our national problems in conformity with our national ethos and the present-day needs.<sup>1</sup> *Fourth*, the Central and the Provincial Governments should start Institutes of Research and Training in Public Welfare.

<sup>1</sup> The author submitted a scheme for such an Academy as early as 1941 to the various leaders and educationists of this country. It met with approval of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who recommended it to the Indian Science Congress for its consideration before going away to Ahmednagar. But the Indian Science Congress took no action, while Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh, the then Education Member of the Government of India, believed in doing nothing. It is a source of satisfaction to the author that the idea has been taken up by the Government of India now, and at a recent meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, a proposal for an Indian National Trust, with an endowment of Rs. four crores (I had suggested two crores) has been adopted. But if the proposed Trust is not be a still-born child, another hunting-ground for self-seekers, then its functions need to be

These Institutes should emphasise co-ordination of the various factors that should be taken into consideration before any plan is launched into action. Gathering of data on every problem and presenting it in a manner that will take in the various parts of our social and national life as an organic whole should be the primary function of these Institutes. *Fifth*, both the Provincial and the Central Governments should start special Departments of Public Welfare, with Ministers in charge. These Departments should centralize all aspects of ameliorative services<sup>1</sup> and put reforms into operation after calculating the relationship of each part to the whole. *Sixth*, we should have a National Science Trust, similar to the one indicated in the Kilgore-Magnuson Bill, now before the American Congress. This Science Foundation should co-ordinate the mathematical, the biological, the social and the applied sciences, etc., which can be easily and effectively mobilized in times of peace and war.<sup>2</sup>

carefully looked into. As they are stated at present, it looks as though "literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, dramatic art and dancing" will monopolise attention. While there is no objection to fostering of these arts that will bring some life and light into the barren life of our masses, the intellectual side of our national life needs equal encouragement. God knows we are a century behind the times. An Indian Academy of Social Sciences should become the leading Section of this proposed National Trust.

<sup>1</sup> The All-India Women's Association, at its meeting at Akola in the first week of January, 1947, is reported to have adopted a resolution, to submit a memorial to the Central and the Provincial Governments, urging them to start separate Departments of Public Welfare, with special Ministers in charge of such Departments.

<sup>2</sup> Motwani, Kewal, *India Can Lead: The Role of Sociology and Social Sciences in National Planning*, Phcenix Publications, Bombay, 1946.

All these mechanisms and institutions are vitally urgent if India is to function as one of the great powers of the world; if our national planning is to succeed and if our culture is to withstand the assault of an alien culture. Synthesis of cultures demands these mechanisms and institutions; without them, India has no chance of keeping pace with the world and of fulfilling her historic destiny of being the spiritual mother of nations.

*February 1, 1947.*

KEWAL MOTWANI

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Voices of earth and air joined in one song,  
Which unto ears that hear said, " Lord and Friend !  
Lover and Saviour ! Thou who hast subdued  
Angers and prides, desires and fears and doubts,  
Thou that for each and all hast given thyself,  
Pass to the Tree ! The sad world blesseth thee  
Who art the Buddh that shall assuage her woes.  
Pass, Hailed and Honoured ! Strive thy last for us,  
King and high Conqueror ! Thine hour is come ;  
This is the Night the ages waited for !"

—*Light of Asia.*

### The world crisis

The fate of humanity hangs in the balance. There is death and desolation on all sides, with little to inspire hope for redemption. Man has become highly destructive. He has destroyed nature's gifts, burnt wheat, cotton, wool and coffee and other articles of consumption, tipped millions of tons of fruit into the seas to keep up prices. He has destroyed forests and turned fertile prairies into deserts. He has tortured dumb animals to wrest secrets of life out of their mute agony and he murders millions of them every day to satisfy his lust of the palate. With elemental, ferocious forces unleashed by science and technology, he has deliberately, consciously and in cold blood set out to bomb cities, maim and murder millions of innocent children, women and men, gassed and roasted others to grow cabbages out of their bone-meal, leaving others to die of cold, starvation and disease. Never has man been so brutalized as now. Sadism, ruthlessness, blood-lust have come to

be recognised as virtues. Man worships at the altar of Mars and lays oblations at its shrine. All his institutions, educational, economic, social, industrial, political, artistic and religious, are geared up to one purpose, which is destruction ; the basis of modern civilization is war, violence, *adharma*. Therefore, man may pray for peace and devise " programs for survival," but his ways of living and social and cultural set-up have sealed his doom and he must keep preparing for war. International organizations, Courts of Justice, etc., cannot produce peace like a rabbit out of a juggler's hat. The foundations of life must be altered to invite peace.

### **The issues at stake**

What we have still to realize is that the issues involved in the present-day crisis all over the world are not west versus east, American-British block versus Soviet Russia, capitalistic democracy versus communism, but yesterday versus to-morrow, an age and outlook that deny the sacredness of life and must make an exit even to the accompaniment of world-wide carnage and destruction, versus the new age which will respect the sanctity of life and will therefore herald peace and harmony between individuals, groups and nations. The birth of this new age will require a psychological revolution. There must be a complete transvaluation of our values, a re-definition of the purpose of human existence, a clear grasp of the fundamental principles which ensure stability of human social institutions, a reorganization of human life on a global scale, with

a determined effort to eliminate every trace of conflict, *adharma*, from all aspects of life.

### **Contemporary India of contrasts**

Many sensitive souls scan the heavens for some sign which may portend hope for such a future; there is an unbearable loneliness for them. But merciful Gods whisper to them words of cheer in the silence of the night. To the author has been vouchsafed one such word, and that is **INDIA**. Not the India of to-day, battered and broken, oblivious of her rich, spiritual heritage, of the majesty of her soul, her millions undernourished and dying in epidemics of famines and mutual slaughter, her social and cultural institutions in decadence; not the India of contrasts, of fabulously rich princes and appallingly poor masses; of industrial magnates, business tycoons and famished working classes; of palaces and slums; of splendid traditions of elevating religious and spiritual thought and deep ignorance and immorality; of magnificent art embodying eternal verities that uplift man and the present-day neurotic, mechanised entertainment, mongrel music, celluloid morals and a caricature of art that debases. Not the India of to-day, but India as an **IDEA**, which once lived and functioned in the lives of her men, women and children and in her social institutions and which must reincarnate for her own redemption and that of the human race. The author has sought to sense that India and he only presents the conclusions of his quest.

### Philosophic negation or moral nihilism

This India needs to be discovered by every man for himself. The methods of this search have to be something more than the academic, empirical techniques of western historians and indiscriminately applied by our countrymen to the study of our history.<sup>1</sup> The western historians have little appreciation of the forces that have gone into the making of the Indian nation and their judgments are not unoften based on India's present position of political subordination. In an otherwise excellent treatise on the contemporary history of America appears the following statement: "In the history of India is illustrated the force of philosophic negation. In the history of recent Germany, in *Mein Kampf* and the dictatorship of Adolf Hitler, is illustrated the force of ethicless life-affirmation, of the will-to-power. The force of philosophies of optimism, life-affirmation as ethical will to overcome evils which obstruct the advances of good life for all, is illustrated in the history of Christianity and enlightenment".<sup>2</sup>

This statement, coming from the great Beards, shows that even such seasoned historians are capable of missing the message of history. While it is true that Christianity played its part in Europe as a "philosophy of optimism and life-affirmation" upto the fifteenth century, it seems to have missed its mission after the birth of the technological age. If the

<sup>1</sup> An interesting example of our westernised approach to History is afforded by a small volume, *On Indian History*, by D. P. Mukerjee.

<sup>2</sup> Beard, Charles and Mary, *The Spirit of America*, New York, 1943, p. 4.

third sentence in the above quotation were placed second and Hitler and his dictatorship seen as the climax of "Christianity and enlightenment," we would have to change our views about the "philosophies of optimism and life-affirmation as ethical will" in Christianity in Europe and America. Christianity, notwithstanding its denominations numbering over a thousand, is one in Europe and America, as is the technological culture of the two continents. Professor Lewis Mumford, one of the most outstanding sociologists in the world to-day, is, therefore, right when he sees in the American methods of totalitarian warfare a continuation of "ethicless life-affirmation and will-to-power," "a moral nihilism." He says: "We have dehumanised ourselves and no longer accept any limitations, inner or outer, upon our will-to-annihilation. Within fifteen brief years every restriction has been removed; first in theory by our fascist enemies, then in practice by the same enemies: but finally *by ourselves* on an even more destructive scale. The fascist theory of total warfare was put forth by the Italian General Douhet—volubly parroted by Major Sikorsky and others in the United States. The believers in this theory held that wars could be won by unlimited aerial attack upon the civilian population. The demolition of Warsaw and the centre of Rotterdam brought this theory into action. Instead of recoiling against it and concentrating our whole might on the fighting areas, we imitated our enemies. By the practice of obliteration bombing (alias strategic bombing) we lost any edge of moral superiority we originally held over the enemy with



regard to our *methods* of fighting. . . . This general moral disintegration paved the way for the use of the atomic bomb. Nihilism had set up a chain-reaction in the human mind : by a succession of bombardments our last inhibitions were removed.

“ This change did not come about overnight, nor without considerable reluctance, even on the part of the military commanders. The question as to whether it was morally defensible to achieve victory over Japan by wholesale destruction from the air was still debated in Washington as late as the spring of 1942 ; it was not yet a closed question. . . . Long before the war came to an end in Europe the Army had abandoned all pretence of bombing military targets alone : we resorted to devastation and terror on the largest scale possible. . . . A. E’s dictum that man becomes the image of the thing he hates has been fully borne out in the present war. . . . Now our methods of fighting have become totalitarian : that is, we have placed no limits upon our capacity to exterminate or destroy. Morality has become police : a mere tool of the state. In the act of grappling with fascism, the enemy has forced into our hands his most dangerous weapon, moral nihilism. *That nihilism is the social counterpart of the atomic bomb*”.<sup>1</sup>

America’s advance towards “ moral nihilism,” complained of by Mumford, has been fairly rapid

<sup>1</sup> Mumford, Lewis, *Programme for Survival*, London, 1946, pp. 16-18. The author has dealt with the fundamental characteristics of western civilization in his *Science and Society in India*, 1945, chapter 1. A brief outline will be found in the chapter, entitled “ India : A Conflict of Cultures.”

after the dropping of atom bombs on Japan and the cessation of hostilities in the West. According to a report, published in Washington D. C. by a Republican member of the Senate War Investigation Committee, "senseless and unprovoked attacks, burgomasters threatened and beaten, civilian police clubbed with their own weapons, women publicly molested and civilians being stopped at night by soldiers who slugged them senseless, are alleged against the American soldiers in the America occupied zone of Germany. The Report was published against the objections by the United States War Department and opposition by democratic colleagues on the Committee after many 'leakages' of details of the document in the press here. . . . The report said that 'unprovoked assaults, public drunkenness, assistance in violation of German law, black-market activities and similar breaches of discipline lower the prestige of the American Army' and that 'certain high generals have been conducting themselves in a manner to destroy the morale of the whole troops.'"<sup>1</sup>

This reveals a sad state of mind on part of representatives of the nation that prides itself on "philosophies of optimism, life-affirmation as ethical will to overcome evils which obstruct the advances of good life." American occupation of Pacific Islands for strategic purposes, its alignment with Britain and rumoured amalgamation of military objectives and standardisation of instruments of warfare, the cruises of the American Navy in the Mediterranean, its inter-

<sup>1</sup> A *Reuter's* message, in *Free Press*, Bombay, December 5, 1946.

ference in the internal affairs of China, Iran, Korea, and now in Egypt,<sup>1</sup> bear out Mumford's thesis that "moral nihilism" has overtaken the United States of America and that the defeat of Germany and Italy is really their victory, since they have placed their instrument of war and hatred in the hands of their victors! So much then with regard to the Beards' approach to history, Christian philosophies of life-affirmation and optimism and Indian philosophies of negation.

These methods of study of history by prejudiced historians do not apply to India. India needs to be studied and understood in a different light. An attempt has been made in the following pages to discover the inner purpose and plan of India's history, to find out if India affords an example of "philosophic negation" or of an "optimism, life-affirmation as ethical will to overcome evils which obstruct advances of good life for all," so that India, now entering on an era of overall national reconstruction, will be fully aware of her "manifest destiny" and build on the foundations, laid secure and true, by the master-craftsmen of her culture, and also reveal to the world her ancient secret of building an enduring civilization based on eternal verities.

### **The plan and purpose of India's history**

The second chapter touches the high spots of India's History. In retrospect, India reveals a purpose and

<sup>1</sup> As alleged by Makram Ebeid Pasha, Leader of the Kotla Party, in his disclosures before the National Bar Club on Saturday, December 14, 1946, and reported in the *Free Press*, Bombay, December 15, 1946.

a plan to the fulfilment of which she dedicated all her institutions, educational, social, political, economic, artistic, cultural and religious. Behind the story of crowns and kingdoms tumbling down, the major plan projected by Providence has taken shape, so that we see its outlines silhouetted against the dark firmament of the present. Environmental, biological, ethnological, psychological and spiritual forces have gone into the making of an Indian culture of amazing virility and continuity. If man is not an accident of nature and his doings and thoughts have a meaning, then history is something more than a series of unrelated events and happenings. It has a purpose and a plan, and India's history reveals these *in excelsis*.

### **The fundamentals of Indian culture**

The third chapter is devoted to an analysis of the various aspects of Indian culture, such as religion and philosophy, sciences, arts (comprising dancing, music, painting, sculpture, architecture and minor arts), literature, and social institutions, such as education, marriage and family and the state. One idea runs through all these modes of thought and segments of social reality, and that is the Vision of the One, while India's history is a continuous attempt to make this Vision a living reality in the life of every man, woman and child. This enduring quest and its realization have imparted to Indian culture a continuity, universality, humanity and spirituality that have placed it beyond the challenge of time. This Vision emphasised integration, synthesis, *dharma*, gathering up of the many into the one,

in every phase of life of the individual, the group and the nation.

### **The author's point of view**

Many a scholar has dealt with various phases of Indian culture and in greater detail. The present author makes no apologies for taking a different stand. He affirms that the Vedic seers, who laid the foundations of Indian culture, sought and found the eternal verities to which they gave a verbal garb in the Vedas ; that the Vedas contain the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries that need to be understood and interpreted in the light of modern scientific and sociological research ; that the contributions made by India's ancient scientists, such as biologists, physicists, chemists, mathematicians, astronomers, etc., were woven into the fabric of daily life of the masses and that the cultural changes, born of the impact of such scientific investigations, were intelligently understood and controlled. With the aid of knowledge of laws of cultural change, we should now be able to reconstruct in our minds pictures of various periods of India's history in which all expressions of thought and scientific discoveries acted and reacted on one another and on the lives of the people, giving birth to various culture-patterns prevailing at those times.<sup>1</sup> We should learn to look at the various segments of India's life as an organic whole, in which the secret of progress lay in syn-

<sup>1</sup> Such knowledge of techniques of controlling cultural change, which is of recent growth in the West, would be of inestimable value in the present-day world when man's inventions for destruction of life seem to outstrip the awakening of his social conscience.

chronised orchestration of the various phases of life rather than in movement along parallel lines.

The treatment of this vast subject has been compressed within very short space, and it will seem as though clarity has been sacrificed for the sake of brevity. But the author's purpose is not an historical and exhaustive treatment of the subject, but only discovery of the fundamental *motif* that runs like a golden thread through the entire fabric of Indian life. He only seeks to submit a point of view, with the hope that the reader will find it profitable in his study of Indian culture.

#### **India : A conflict of cultures**

The fourth chapter is devoted to a discussion of the social setting of the present India. A sociological analysis of the contemporary cultural pattern shows that India's national ethos and the western culture of machine and science are engaged here in a deadly combat. During the last two centuries or so, science and machine of the West have come to India and put her on the highway of world's cultural commerce. They have made India a part of the world, physically, economically and culturally. The barriers which kept India within the high walls of isolation have broken down and India is on the march once again. But science and machine have combined to work an internal change in India also. They have thrown her whole culture-complex into the melting-pot, so that her institutions, spiritual values, customs, traditions and beliefs are being challenged. India's national genius and the scientific culture of the

West have come face to face and are fighting for mastery, and this confronting of cultures, indigenous and alien, has produced, as it must, a considerable amount of disorganization that follows in the wake of such contacts, whether the units involved in the situation be individuals, groups or nations, unless the situation is understood and the cultural and social changes carefully controlled. An emigrant to another country experiences a certain amount of personal disorganization when he comes face to face with a group of people whose customs, habits and beliefs are different from those of his people. He must adjust himself intelligently and become a useful citizen of the nation of his adoption, or else he will become a maladjusted individual, and therefore a liability. The same applies to nations and their cultures. India must either assimilate the contributions of machine and science coming to her from the West, or go under. As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rightly remarks : "The real struggle in India is not between Hindu and Muslim cultures, but between these two and the conquering scientific culture of the modern civilization."<sup>1</sup>

### **Sociological significance of India's recent history**

Sociologically speaking, India's recent history is a record of this assimilative process at work, and various organizations, religious, political, social and others, have been unconsciously engaged in the resolving of this clash of cultures in the country. But there has been no clear conception of the gravity

<sup>1</sup> Nehru, Jawaharlal, *An Autobiography*, p. 470.

of the situation, of the tremendous issues involved, much less adequate and scientific knowledge of the laws of social and cultural change and of the techniques of controlling them. Indeed, such knowledge and the desire to control cultural changes is of recent growth even in the West, where the triumphant progress of science, man's impressive conquests over nature, the sudden prosperity following on the emergence of industrialism, and the Darwinian theory of steady evolution of better species were challenged only recently on the vast battlefields of Europe and Asia, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific in both directions.

### **The danger of unilinear type of thinking**

The author will be accused of over-simplification of facts, of ascribing to a single factor, the culture of machine and science, what is supposed to be the outcome of a multiplicity of complex and interrelated causes. Such a criticism can only arise out of inadequate understanding of all that is implied in culture, and this has been fully defined in the following pages. The validity of his thesis will be obvious if we could imagine what would happen if India suddenly decided to discard science and machine. The railways, the arteries of communication, would fade away. Telegraph and telephone, the nerves of the nation, would cease to vibrate. The newspaper that puts us into touch with the world would disappear, leaving us in isolation. Electric lights and fans would be no more and we would have to sweat in the heat of the tropics. There would be no electric elevators



in the tall buildings of the cities. Cities would soon disintegrate. There would be no street-cars. Aeroplanes would cease to hum over our heads. Famines would increase, and the isolated famine areas would have to face their tragic doom of decimation without hope of aid from the surplus regions. Medicines would not be easily transported from one region to another. Our economic life would be completely disrupted : India would have to revert to the barter system. There would be no ships bringing necessities of life or articles of luxuries to our shores. Hydraulic schemes would lie idle. The mills and factories would rust away. Without watches and clocks, we would have no idea of time. Every aspect of the nation's life would come to a standstill. India would revert to the early primitive stage of life.<sup>1</sup>

### **Is there renaissance in India?**

The problem confronting India is the reconciliation of this conflict of cultures, and the chapter is devoted to presenting an all-inclusive picture of this *kurukshetra* in which every man, woman and child is a combatant, even though unconsciously. The picture is, no doubt, drawn in sombre colours and the form of presentation does not make a pleasant reading. It is certainly far from being a soporific to lull us to sleep with the comfortable thought that there is a "renaissance in India." During the last thirty years or so, there has been a general belief

<sup>1</sup> A brief outline of the essentials of planning in terms of synthesis of science, with India's national ethos, has been presented in the author's *Science and Society in India*.

that there is a renaissance in India and that India is a nation. Many books have been published on this subject, but it is the author's painful duty to join issues with these illustrious authors and thinkers, and he feels constrained to affirm that the core of Indian culture is in the course of disintegration and that India has all the characteristics of an amorphous, anonymous, unruly mob.

### Not a "verdict"

This point of view, no doubt, will hurt the patriotic susceptibilities of those who love India and for all that she stands for,<sup>1</sup> but the reader may rest assured that this survey of the conflict of cultures in the contemporary India is not intended to be in the nature of a "drain inspector's report," as some one is said to have described Miss Mayo's *Mother India*, nor of a *Verdict on India*. Such pleasant pastimes may be permitted to those whose races and nations can indulge in wholesale massacre of nations and yet arrogate to themselves the airs of being Christian democracies, endowed with "philosophies of optimism, life-affirmation as ethical will to overcome evils which obstruct the advance of good life for all." The author has sought to keep clear of both these points of view and to present an objective picture of facts as a sociologist sees them. In such a picture, no item however insignificant, should be omitted, for, behind facts and events, scattered in space and time, there is a principle of coherence which gives

<sup>1</sup> The author counts himself amongst them.

them their meaning and significance, and a slight omission may nullify the validity of the thesis. But if the author is ever convinced to the contrary, he will not hesitate to abjure his position openly. For the present, it should suffice to say that this thesis has been presented from platforms of all the Universities but two of this country, and of various cultural, religious and academic organizations, without having been challenged at any time. He will consider himself amply rewarded if his analysis of the social disorganization, so widely prevalent in the country, will stimulate thought and appropriate action in the immediate future.

### **Various plans and their objectives**

The fifth and the last chapter is a modest attempt at indicating the technique of resolving this conflict and *planning a synthesis*. A number of plans have been in the field for some time. The plan put forth by the Bombay magnets, one by a communist leader, another by a follower of Gandhiji who would like to give a new lease of life to the Gandhian ideology, a plan prepared by the Viceroy's Council, have been with us and they have been discussed by the public and the press. An alien government, awakened to its humiliation by world events and opinion for having kept four hundred million people in abject poverty, ignorance and misery, launched forth schemes of planning with feverish haste. A special department of planning was started, of which the first man in charge was one of the formulators of the Bombay plan. But the Department has been closed.

In addition, there has been a spate of commissions, committees, technical missions, bureaux, campaigns, etc., coming into existence overnight. Battalions of "experts" have been flown from the United Kingdom, U.S.A. and Russia. A derelict government, reeking with antiquity, utterly ill-equipped in the techniques of modern public administration, devoid of knowledge of the science of planning in the light of world experience, began making pretensions of planning that smacked of the bravado of a school-boy! The targets aimed at in practically all the schemes are stated to be food, clothing, shelter, education, medicine, better standard of living and raising the purchasing power of the masses. Quite laudable objectives, to be sure, in a country where annual income per capita is Rs. 100 or so, where forty per cent of the population live in starvation and where only ten per cent can read and write. But these plans only scratch the surface of the problem, they do not go to the roots of it.

### **The objectives of the National Planning Committee**

But the organization that alone can be said to be entitled to plan for the nation is the National Planning Committee, appointed by the Indian National Congress, in 1938, with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its President. The Committee has divided its work under ten headings: land, water, resources, labour, agriculture, industries, trade, credit, finance and education, each in charge of various sub-committees. One who has some knowledge of plans evolved by other countries will notice many omissions, but the

most significant thing that will strike his attention is the statement of the National Planning Committee in their Handbook No. 1. It proceeds thus : "Planning under a democratic system may be defined as the technical co-ordination, by disinterested experts, of consumption, production, investment, trade and income distribution in accordance with social objectives set by bodies representative of the nation. Such planning is not to be considered from the point of view of economics and the raising of the standard of living, but *must include cultural and spiritual values and the human side of life.*"<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is imperative that we should first define the "cultural and spiritual values and the human side of life," before we formulate our plans and put them in operation. The third chapter of this book is a sketchy attempt at definition of these "cultural and spiritual values and the human side of life" implicit in the Indian *ethos*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Planning Committee, *Handbook* No. 1, italics author's.

<sup>2</sup> The need for clarification of these issues is particularly great, since the national government, which is about to come into being, will take up this question in right earnest. And there is a babble of voices abroad which may drown the essential significance of India's planning. According to the above statement of the National Planning Committee, Indian planning should emphasise "cultural and spiritual values and the human side of life," but according to Professor K. T. Shah, the Secretary of the National Planning Committee, the future Indian state should have no truck with religion ; India must be "a secular state." See his *Principles of Planning*, p. 87.

Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar, who led the Indian scientists' delegation to U.K. and U.S.A., was so much fascinated by America's industrial development and exploitation of natural resources that he felt that "an Indian must commit suicide for not having developed his own country." *The Hindu*, Madras, February 25, 1945. What Sir Shanti Swarup did not see in that country was the agony, during the period of depression, of the millions of farmers, who were paying for the follies of their forebears who committed

### Planning synthesis of cultures : two examples

The last chapter, therefore, goes into the meaning, purpose and objectives of planning at some length and indicates the implication of synthesis. In the latter part is taken up a brief discussion of crime and education with a view to show how these problems, born of the impact of science and machine, may be resolved.

### Sociological significance of crime

Crime, from standpoint of *a priori*, legalistic assumptions, is an infringement of law and calls for punishment of the criminal. But from the sociological point of view, crime is indicative of the breakdown of adjustment between the individual and the life around him. Crime is a result of conflict between the various constituent elements, the individual, his environments and the social set-up, and its solution will require scientific analysis of these elements, a

rape on good earth, destroyed forests, loosened the soil which blew out into the sea at the rate of 300 crores of tons per year. It is not difficult to be spendthrift with nature's resources ; but to conserve them requires far greater assiduity and intelligence. The reader will find the oath that was administered to the kings in ancient India at the time of their accession to the throne, given in section 8, chapter III, in strong contrast with Sir Shanti Swarup's exuberance. In India also, soil erosion has assumed serious proportions and dust-storms are not infrequent.

Mr. K. M. Pannikar, of Bikaner, would like to go a step further. He wants, in India, "the establishment of a central British institution organized and maintained by the British Government . . . for maintenance of British ideals in political life, in the field of legal relationships, and in the wide range of conceptions which constitute modern society." *The Manchester Guardian*, March 17, 1945. But this is exactly what the British Government has been doing in India for the last two centuries through universities and colleges, indoctrinating India's youth with their social and political ideals and thus keeping their hold on our nation through careerists and opportunists of this type. Political conquest must always be accompanied by cultural conquest.

comprehensive program of techniques with which to recondition the criminal, effect a re-formation of his attitudes and actions, eliminate from society the sources of discord that breed conflict in the form of anti-social attitudes and actions of the criminal and the revengeful procedures of law, and then effect a permanent adjustment between the criminal and the society. In addition to being an excellent illustration of the conflict-situation, there are other considerations that have led the author to select this subject for a detailed treatment. There has been considerable criticism of late, in both the Indian and the British press, of our prisons, and there is an insistent demand for improving them. They are compared to Belsen camps at present. But improvement of prisons is only a minor part of the problem, while the treatment of crime has many aspects and the battle has to be fought on many fronts. With the increasing tempo of industrialization in our country, the wave of crime must rise, and our governments will be forced to give an increasing measure of attention to the solution of this pressing problem. That the gravity of the problem is not adequately realized will be evident from the fact that even so important an organization as the National Planning Committee has not thought fit to delegate it to one of its Sub-Committees. The author hopes that his discussion of the subject will draw to it the attention that it so richly deserves and that our leaders will draw up uniform policies and practices of prison reform and reclamation of the criminal for the whole

country.<sup>1</sup> It is somewhat in the manner, presented here, that we shall be able to meet the challenge of the numerous problems facing our country and plan a synthesis of the old and the new, of the East and the West.<sup>2</sup>

### **The purpose of the volume**

The purpose of the volume is to indicate the task confronting India and to point to the sociological techniques of solving it. The task of meeting the challenge of every problem, in the light of India's experience and the world forces, falls within the purview of the National Planning Committee. The author's has been a much humbler task. His aim has been to redefine the uniqueness of the Indian culture and its spiritual values, to focus attention on the significance of the social disorganization so-widely prevalent at present, and to indicate the technique of meeting the challenge of to-day. He will consider himself amply rewarded if the volume serves its purpose even partially. For, we must never forget that the India we want to build must be an *Indian* India. India is "the small voice" of the world, and if that voice fails in these days when there is "dark night of the soul" abroad, for both individuals and nations, then life has been robbed of its hope and heaven of its glory. As some one has said, "If India lives, who dies? If India dies, who lives?"

<sup>1</sup> Judged by all canons of modern criminology, the handling of the *Hur* problem by the Central and the Sind Governments during the last few years is not only barbaric but lunatic!

<sup>2</sup> The author has dealt with these problems in detail in his forthcoming books, *Criminology for Indian Students and University and The Future in India*.



## 2. THE MEANING AND PURPOSE OF INDIA'S HISTORY

### **No history of India on sociological lines**

It will be long before an authentic story of the rise of Indian civilization, constructed on sociological lines, will be available to the world. The historical material of various types remains untouched. Some of it lies buried under earth, while the written records and works of art are scattered in libraries, public and private, and museums in various parts of the world. Indian scholars are still strangers to the technique of sociological interpretation in which an event is considered as the climax of a congeries of causes, physical, vital, mental, moral and spiritual. But broad outlines of India's history and her achievements in various aspects of life and thought are available, notwithstanding the haze of uncertainty and controversy that still surrounds them. An attempt will be made in the following pages to present a picture of India's history, painted with a big brush. Our main purpose will be to discover the trend of India's destiny, the one *motif* that runs like a golden thread across the warp and woof of her history.

### **The Sumerian civilization**

The recent excavations at Mohan Jo Daro in Sind and at Harappa in the Punjab have revealed relics of a civilization that antedates the advent of Aryans in India, is about 3000 B.C., and is contemporary of the Sumerian civilization of the Euphrates Valley.

It arose on the banks of the river Indus, as arose contemporaries of this civilization in Egypt and China around their respective rivers, and the evidence, such as it is, shows it to have been in a flourishing condition at that time. It was succeeded by the Aryan civilization.

### **The creative genius of Aryans**

According to some historians, the Aryans infiltrated into the country from 1500 B.C. onwards from the Ural Mountains or Central Asia, though the amazing vigour of their creative genius, as is enshrined in the Vedas, and their colonizing genius would warrant a much earlier date. Sanskrit (literally planned), a highly developed language, with a scientifically planned syntax, capable of giving expression to the finest nuances of philosophical thought, could not have been the medium of expression of a primitive, nomadical tribe of people. The literary output of this age, which we shall discuss in the following pages, is amazingly rich and reveals a knowledge of the greater and lesser mysteries of life, which is unequalled in its vastness of concept and design by literature of any other people in the world. The philosophic literature of later times, such as the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Epics, etc., are elaborations and refinements of the Vedic thought. The Aryans of the Vedic times were a highly evolved group of people; they developed an organized social life. Much material progress was made. Trade and industry created wealth. Great cities like Pataliputra and Vaishali arose. A leisured class came into being and

knowledge and culture flourished. Sciences were fairly well known and were being further elaborated. India acquired a social and political homogeneity; these Aryan pioneers soon put a stamp of their personality on the country. But life was in the course of settling down in its tracks; crystallization had commenced, and the need arose for a shock from within and without.

### **Inner awakening and external invasion**

Buddha and Mahavira took birth and initiated an era of spiritual iconoclasm. Intellectualism and formalism of the times had bred ethical scepticism and a stratified social order. The two great teachers came to call India back to the memory of her life which was warm, plastic and progressive. Their's was a reaction against the hedonism of the emancipated and the worldly-minded people. What they sought to accomplish from within through illumined interpretation of the Vedic and Upanishadic thought and through the majesty of their souls, Providence sought to accomplish from without by inviting invasions from Persia and Greece. Darius annexed Sind and parts of the Punjab to his Persian territories, while the meteoric passage of the dashing Greek, Alexander, gave a shaking to the people who quickly regained their vigour, bannered themselves under Chandragupta, the Maurya, and won back their country from the hands of the foreigners. This short-lived contact with representatives of the virile race of the West had a salubrious effect on the people of India and her culture.

### **The Great Mauryas**

Chandragupta belonged to the royal family of Magadha, was an exile for some time, gathered an army and ascended to the throne of his kingdom in 321 B.C. He attacked the Greeks in Sind and the Punjab, swept everything before him and established himself as Emperor of India, ruling the country from Kandhar to Nerbuda, from Sind to Bengal. Chandragupta was a military genius and had a marvellous capacity for organizing his empire. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador, who lived at his court, has left us his observations of Chandragupta's rule. Under Chandragupta, India came under the control of a centralized government, with a well-developed system of public administration. Chanakya, his Chief Minister, considered religion as an instrument of the state; it had political value, its significance as a moral force was individual and personal, not political. His well-known work on polity, *Arthashastra*, discusses national and administrative affairs and diplomacy with a candid realism and refreshing frankness.

### **Asoka : The first builder of Indian nation**

Chandragupta died in 297 B.C. and was succeeded by his son, Bindusara, a man of some intellectual inclinations. His son, Asoka, succeeded him to the throne in 274 B.C. Asoka ruled for forty years and extended his empire to Madras. The Andhra state acknowledged his overlordship, while Pandya, Chola and Kerala further south remained independent. A

great soldier, who maintained the Mauryan traditions of valour and conquest, Asoka excelled equally in saintliness of character after he embraced Buddhism. He made Buddhism a living power in the nation and sent missionaries abroad to take the message of the Great Teacher. His Edicts of ahimsa, harmlessness and compassion, were inscribed on rock and pillar throughout the country. After his death in 237 B.C., many provinces broke away and the Mauryan dynasty ended, though some of its descendants are said to have continued to rule in Rajputana till the middle of the eighth century A.D.

India was well on the way towards becoming a nation under these Mauryan rulers. They had given a feeling of political cohesiveness and unity to the country, while the great teachers had cleared the spiritual atmosphere and put the people once again on the pathway of renovated life. India's educational institutions continued their work of cultural progress of the masses, as we shall see later ; architecture and sculpture thrived, and the fusion of the races and their cultures went on smoothly. The formative forces of nationality continued to work. The country was now ready for the next stage of her work which could only be revealed by another crisis. This came, as it had done before, in the form of a fresh invasion.

### **Fresh invasions : The Kushans**

In the second and first centuries before Christ, the Syrians, the Scythians and the Greeks poured into the Punjab and the Indus Valley and established themselves as rulers for nearly three hundred years.

They were conquered in their turn by the Kushans by about 90 A.D. The Kushans were a tribe from Central Asia. Their greatest ruler was Kanishka, from 78 to 125 A.D., a contemporary of Trojan and Hadrian. He proved to be a man of cultivated tastes. In his reign, arts and sciences continued to thrive. Greco-Buddhist sculpture took definite shape, while Charaka advanced the science of medicine. Mahayana Buddhism became systematised and the country was covered with statues of Bodhisatvas. India had conquered her conquerors, absorbed them; the processes of cultural evolution and racial synthesis went on.

### **The Gupta rulers and the Golden Age**

Meanwhile Chandragupta (not of Mauryan dynasty) had established Gupta dynasty at Magdha. His son, Samdra Gupta, during his reign of fifty years, won back from the Kushans the lost dominions, Bengal, Assam, Nepal and South India, and spent his treasures on promoting religion, arts, sciences and literature. He achieved distinction as a poet and musician during the interludes of his military operations. He was succeeded by an equally illustrious son, Chandragupta II, also known as Vikramaditya, the Sun of Power. Vikramaditya extended the empire of his arms as well as of the spirit. He gathered round himself at his Court at Ujjain a galaxy of Nine Gems, Navaratna, the famous poets, philosophers, artists, scientists and scholars of his time. The ever-fresh frescoes of Ajanta date during this period. Fa Hien's account of the Gupta times gives us a

clear picture of the maturing of Indian civilization. The invasions of outsiders did not interrupt the even flow of her life. The different racial groups intermingled, the creative genius of the nation was always at work. India's main task of being an integrated nation, with races and cultures fused into each other, went on unhindered; indeed, it was enriched by importation of alien blood. Once more a new wave of invaders interrupted this heyday of India's culture.

### **The Huns**

The Huns had broken loose and were overrunning Europe and Asia. While Attila was raiding Europe and ruining Rome, Tormana was capturing Malwa and Mihrigula, the Terrible, was challenging the Guptas. After a contest lasting over a century, Harsha, a scion of the Guptas, 606 A.D., recaptured the northern territory and gave peace and security to the people for forty years. Yuan Chwang, a Chinese scholar, gives an excellent account of this versatile ruler who excelled in the arts of war no less than in those of peace. He died in 648 A.D. The golden age of the Guptas had done its work.

### **South India : the process of Aryanization**

Let us now turn our attention to the South which was being slowly acclimatized to the essentials of the Aryan culture and was to be its repository, while in the north, the Aryans and their descendants were engaged in assimilating the invaders. Rishi Aastya had gone to the South some centuries before, carrying with himself the essentials of the Vedic

Culture; Sri Ramchandra is said to have met him in the South while on his way to Lanka. The Vedic thought and culture had infiltrated into the South and had taken root in the life of the people.

The Tamil country, south of Krishna river, was divided into four kingdoms: Pandya, with Madura as the capital; Chola, between Pandya Kingdom and Penar river; Kerala, between Chola and Malabar; and Satyapurusha, a small state near Mangalore. The Pandya kingdom existed in 543 B.C., Madura, its capital, was one of the finest Hindu cities, rich with works of architecture, large and small. Its uninterrupted growth, extending over two thousand years, came to an end when the kingdom was overthrown in the eighteenth century A.D.

The Cholas were also of the same antiquity as the Pandyas, being mentioned in the edicts of Asoka, though not much is known of them till the seventh century A.D. when they and the Pandyas were subjected to the depredations of the Pahlavas. These Pahlavas were a wandering offshoot of the early Pahlavas who came to India from north-west and had taken service with the Deccan kings. Aditya, the Chola king, overcame these Pahlavas, and the Cholas began their career of conquest, levying tribute from the South as well as Ceylon. Then, their power declined.

The third and equally ancient kingdom of the Tamils was Kerala or Chera, a king of which, Keralputra, is mentioned in Asoka's inscriptions and in Pliny's history. This kingdom comprised the present Travancore, Malabar, Cochin and carried on



extensive trade with Egypt and Arabia. The Kerala maintained a continuous record of nation-building upto the 13th century A.D.

### **Disintegration of Gupta Empire**

When the Gupta empire disintegrated, a number of small states appeared in the north and the east during the seventh and eighth centuries. Nationalist sentiment subsided. Parochial patriotism took its place, and instead of a central power exercising authority over the whole country, India became divided into five major groups which, individually and collectively, went through the vicissitudes that weakened her and made her an easy prey to foreign invasion. These groups were the Gurjara Pratiharas of Upper India and Rajputana (816-1194); the Palas and Senas of Bengal (730-1200); the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan (750-973); the Cholas of the South (850-1310). Finally, there was the north, with Kashmir in the centre, which emerged by about 650 A.D. and lasted for nearly seven hundred years.

### **The advent of Islam**

This motley of small kingdoms, with their strength wasted on internal warfare, was a poor protection against powerful invaders. About this time, the middle of the eighth century, a new faith had arisen in Arabia, a faith that had "one prophet, one book and a sword dedicated to both." It spread fanwise, went both to the east as well to the west. India felt the first impact of the Arabian invaders in the

eighth century, in fact she may be said to have invited them. Valiant, but short-lived and infructuous resistance of these small kingdoms availed little and they soon gave way before the hordes of Islam. The Arabs invaded Sind but were hurled back by Bapa in Rajputana. But this initial attack was to be followed by many more from the north.

### **The Sultans : political chaos**

In 986 A.D. Sabkutgin, Sultan of Ghazni in Afghanistan, invaded India and established himself in Peshawar. His son, Mahmud, invaded India seventeen times between 1001—1024, carrying back with himself each time an enormous booty of India's wealth and prisoners of war whom he sold as slaves in his country. The five centuries that followed constituted a period of great political and social turmoil in India. India felt the full fury of this new faith, while Europe offered feeble resistance. These invaders were ferocious, fanatical, merciless. Burning of India's cities, plunder of her resources, destruction of her temples, massacre of her masses and their enforced conversion to Islam were the order of the day. The small Indian kingdoms yielded one by one. The Gurjara Praiharas submitted in 1194, the Senas of Bengal in 1200, the Cholas in 1310, and the kingdom of Kashmir in 1339. This was the end of the Hindu rule, though not without a final struggle. The Bengali king, Danuj Mardana, the Rajputs and the Empire of Vijayanagar in the south, offered resistance without success. The Muhammadan rule was firmly established in India. During this Sultan supremacy, Tamur paid a visit,

defeated the forces of the Indian Sultan at Delhi, undermined his power. The Sultans lingered on for another century, after which their rule came to an end after a decisive victory won by Babur over them at the first battle of Paniput in 1526.

### **The nation's creative genius at work**

India's political life during this period reveals a bewildering chaos, with alien dynasties and kings and crowns tumbling over each other in quick succession. But the constructive forces of nationhood continued their work underneath. The small kingdoms gave a social and political cohesiveness to the polyglot population. Votaries of arts and sciences continued their quiet work. Education of the masses was never neglected. Spiritual quest continued unabated. The fusion of races and cultures went on. India's spirit of psychic unity was in the course of taking shape. The abundance of her cultural attainments continued to spill over to the neighbouring countries; the Moslem rulers and invaders became her cultural emissaries to the west. Political turmoil was only a challenge to India's quest for cultural synthesis. India had absorbed its invaders.

### **The Moghuls : spiritual and temporal empires**

Babur fought the Rajputs at Fatehpur Sikri in 1526 and died four years later. He was succeeded by his son, Hamayun, who lost his throne to Sher Shah, and after a life of an exile of sixteen years, won it back one year before his death. His son, Akbar, ascended the throne in 1556. Akbar was an able

ruler. He took over the administration of his empire at the age of eighteen and started adding to his dominions. He combined conquest of his adversaries with the marriage of their daughters, as he mixed religion with rulership and ennobled both. Served by loyal and intelligent ministers, both Hindus and Muhammadans, he ruled justly. Unable to read and write, he revelled in philosophical discussions, considered all faiths as avenues to God, attempted to synthesise their variant voices into Din Illahi, the Religion of God. When Protestants were burning Catholics at Elizabeth's Court in England and Catholics were murdering Protestants in France, when Inquisitors were robbing and killing the Jews in Spain and Bruno was being burnt in Rome, Akbar held weekly religious conferences at his court, with representatives of all denominations. Akbar realized the fundamental note of Indian culture which was synthesis, and he became an embodiment of it in his personal life. Like Asoka, he tried to purify life of the nation and eliminate conflict from various aspects of it.

His son, Jehangir, who succeeded him to the throne in 1605, was a renegade in royal robes ; he was more interested in his harem than in his noble heritage. He undid the work of his father. His son, Shah Jehan, is known for the Taj Mahal, the magnificent tomb, he built over his beloved queen, Mumtaz Begum. His son, Aurangzeb, was the last of the Mughal rulers. He deposed his father in 1657, kept him a prisoner for nine years till he died, extended the boundaries of his empire. His perse-

cution of the Hindus alienated their sympathies and the Moghul empire broke up with his death.

### **Synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures**

It is pertinent to observe here that during the Moghul rule of two centuries, Indian spirit of nationality continued to grow uninterrupted. The vigour of the soul of the nation became manifest in the superb works of art, in the educational institutions which the rulers built, in the exchange of the philosophical and the religious thought, in the birth of literature enriched by the two streams of thought, the Hindu and the Islamic. The religious persecution of the last Moghuls was stoutly resisted by a new offshoot of Hinduism, the Sikhism, which, it is interesting to note, built its spiritual empire under the leadership of Sri Guru Nanak at the same time that Babur established his secular empire; the two were contemporaries. While Sikhism defended Hinduism in the north, the Deccan witnessed the revival of Hinduism under Tukaram, Vaman, Pandit, Eknath and Ramdas. The Sikhs fought against the religious fanaticism of the rulers, while the Maharattas, beginning with Shivaji, a contemporary of Aurangzeb, hacked away at the empire itself and carved out one for themselves.

### **The Maharattas**

Shivaji was a disciple of Ramdas, a mystic by inclinations, a warrior and ruler by necessity. Shivaji organized his government with a thoroughness of the Mauryan polity. He created the new Maharashtra nation, and his kingdom extended to Surat in the

north, Hubli in the south and from Berar, Golconda and Bijapur in the east to the sea in the west. He died in 1682, and his son, Rajaram, carried on twenty-year war of independence against the Mughals. Sahu, his nephew, succeeded him, and he kept up his fight. The Maharatta power continued till the eighteenth century. Save for a defeat at Panipat at the hands of the Afghans, they ruled India till they were overcome by a new power that had been growing slowly in the country. It was the power of Britain.

### **Establishment of British power**

India and Europe had known each other since pre-Alexander days. Europe had been dazed by India's splendour, spiritual and physical, and cast a covetous eye on her across the seas and the deserts. Upto the time of Alexander's invasion, the contacts between India and Europe were mostly commercial and cultural; Alexander's was a hit-and-run type of visit to India. He blazed the trail over the land, while Vasco de Gama, about seventeen hundred years later, came by way of sea, and after a voyage of eleven months from Lisbon, landed at Calicut on the west coast. For one hundred years, the Portuguese went about India, spreading Christianity at the point of the sword. The Dutch arrived early in the 17th century; France was already established on the eastern and the western coasts of India. The German Empire sent its Ostend Company in 1772; Prussia, its Emden Company in 1774. Britain formed a company, with a charter from Queen Elizabeth.

These Christian, commercial competitors fought savagely, embroiled the native rulers in their affrays, their chief concern being to fill their pockets, to levy taxes on the people, to enrich their national coffers with the stolen booty and to "civilize the heathens." Constant warfare among themselves eliminated the weak, and the English drove out the French and settled down to fulfil their resolve of 1686 "to establish a large, well-grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come." They built trading stations in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, fortified them ; built villages around them, imported armies and artillery, trained Indians to fight for them as their hirelings, helped some Indian rulers against others, later finished up their friends, signed and forged treaties, broke them, robbed princes, princesses and the people. The British government looked on complacently, did not object to the heathen-money flowing into the country that was having a hard time with the French Wars, the American War of Independence and the Chartist resurrections at home. Warren Hastings and Clive, the arch-criminals, became the empire-builders. India henceforth did not have to deal with hard-hearted, cruel invaders who after all settled down into the country and whose ferocity she tamed slowly, but with shrewd shop-keepers, oblivious of all honour, their own or of their country. India's industries were crushed and the artisans and craftsmen followed the doom of their avocations. Poverty, misery and famine stalked the land. Macaulay gives a terrible account of the oppressions of the East India Company. It waged wars

throughout the country. The Mysore Wars, the Maharatta Wars, the Wars with the Sikhs in the Punjab, with the Mirs of Sind, annexation of Satara and Jhansi, Nagpur and Oudh, these were the steps by which this trading company carved out an "English dominion for all time to come."

### **India's War of Independence**

An enfeebled and impoverished nation broke out in a short-lived and fruitless War of Independence in 1857, but the British guns of large calibre blew out the brains of the rebels. The Company was bought off by the British Government, which assumed the charge of ruling the country. The new rulers continued the policies of their predecessors, carried on frontier wars, the iniquitous Afghan Wars, the Burmese Wars, and thus completed the task of the Company. The Pax Britannia began, has been in existence for a century and is now drawing to a close.

### **Significance of Indo-British alliance**

This alliance between India and Britain is a major event of world history, and not a chance occurrence. This small Island, set in the northern bleak seas, is as much a distinct geographical entity as is India. Both are isolated from their main lands by nature's frontiers, and this isolation has imparted to both a cultural homogeneity, a psychic integrity which they imprint on every child born within their borders. Britain, like India, has been a laboratory for racial synthesis: a Britisher is a strange brew of many



breeds! In his veins flows blood of many strains. To these environmental forces and a rich racial heritage, nature added her bounty of vast natural resources that gave the country mastery of the seas, monopoly of world markets, helped her to build up an empire, to develop an administrative machinery based on principles analogous to those of the Mauryan polity. Fate selected Britain to be in the vanguard of Industrial Revolution that was to change the face of the earth. Britain developed political and social institutions that have perhaps the longest record for continuity, bearing witness to their capacity for adaptation to changing times. She produced a marvellously rich literature that enshrines sentiments similar to those recorded by the seers of India in their Vedas and other philosophical and sacred literature. The "manifest destiny" of both the nations seems to have run on parallel lines. Providence brought these rugged rulers from the West to give to India the fruits of their national experience—synthesis of races, enrichment of biological strains, unity among the people, a strong central government reflecting the nation's will and based on the rule of law, a progressive industrialization, an increasing use of the processes and products of science, and thus help to put India into alignment with the progressive world-forces.

### **A two-way traffic**

The Britisher, in turn, was to learn from India her message of Life Eternal. It was to be a two-way traffic. The culture of conflict, born of anti-social use of science and machine, that holds the western

world in thrall, could have probably been avoided if the Britisher had been interested in knowing India's contributions to natural as well as social sciences in times past and in her techniques of controlling cultural changes, if he had accepted India's rich spiritual treasures with as much eagerness as he grasped her material wealth. The fundamentals of Indian culture were better understood and appreciated by the German scholars than by the British. Science and technology, that have come to India through her alliance with Britain, would have come as a part of the world cultural change. Japan, China, Turkey and Persia accepted science and machine, without receiving them as gifts from alien rulers. Traits of culture migrate with the same speed as the mechanisms of transportation. Indeed, it is not altruism that made Britain introduce science and machine in India; two wars have been necessary to reveal to her the disastrous consequences of her policy of obstructionism. But in the failure of Britain to understand and appreciate India's spiritual contributions and the purpose of her link with India has lain the tragedy of the western world.

#### **The cause of India's frustration in Britain**

Judged from the standpoint of these objectives of mutual service, India's alliance with Britain may be considered a failure, at best a partial success. India's resentment at the British rule is born of this deep sense of frustration of the very purpose of her being, which, as we have tried to sense, is unity. India has received no conscious

or specific assistance in the accomplishment of her purpose ; her rulers were mere birds of passage, just shop-keepers. India has not known the best of Britain.<sup>1</sup>

But history is never cheated of its purpose ; it hurls nations and empires into deadly combats and quietly works out its aims. The final issues are always secure with the side that can encompass the Eternal, for history has a purpose and man is not an accident of nature. India may have to wade through many a storm, go through many a misery, but the sun of her glory shall rise soon. For, on the light of that sun depends the salvation of mankind.

We are now in a position to distil, out of this rapid survey of the landmarks of her history, the lesson that India teaches us, so as to be the better equipped in the reconstruction of her future.

### **The fundamental note of Indian culture : geographical unity**

Long before history can recall its memory, India took birth as an Idea in the mind of her Maker. Geological upheavals brought about the formation of this sub-continent, so that mountains and seas surround her, serve as her sentinels and keep a vigil over her plains. The snow-capped Himalayas, stretching from Burma to Baluchistan, held back the nomadic hordes of Central Asia from swamping her and caught the rain-laden clouds to feed her parched plains with life-giving waters, while three seas, with

<sup>1</sup> The process of intellectual and spiritual conquest of Britain by India has been very slow indeed, while Indian thought considerably influenced the Romantic movement in Germany.

the Eastern and the Western Ghats, surround her southern plateau and provide her with sufficient open doors for cultural and commercial contacts with the outside world. There are no frontiers within the borders of the nation to disrupt the unity of her life, as forbidding walls of nature separate one nation from another in Europe and make it one vast battle-field for isolationistic nationalisms. India was intended to be one unit, and nature obeyed the plan. Her history is a continuous movement towards attainment of social and political unity. The close relationship between India's geography and social and political evolution is not adequately realized in the present-day strife.

### **Ethnic unity**

India's population reveals a marvellously composite character. The Negrito race that came from Africa and soon passed away, leaving little trace behind; the proto-Australoids, dark-skinned, snub-nosed, long-headed people, that came from Palestine; the Austriacs, comparatively fair, straight-nosed and long-headed that came from the Mediterranean region *via* Mesopotamia; the Dravidians that came before the fourth millenium B.C., also long-headed and civilized, followed by Armenoids from Asia Minor. These were supposed to be of the same Aegean race as the pre-Hellenic Greece. They spread themselves over western and southern India, penetrated the Gangetic Valley and built a city civilization. Then came the Aryans, tall, loose-limbed, fair, with prominent noses. From the east came the Mongoloids, who penetrated Assam,

Bengal and Nepal. These were small, with broad heads, flat noses, dark or yellow complexion, and slanting eyes. All these ethnic groups have mingled freely in the respective regions that they occupied. They are the main stocks from which have sprung the Aryo-Dravidians of Hindusthan, the Mongolo-Dravidians of Bengal, Assam and Orissa, the Scythio-Dravidians of the North-West, Rajputana and Sind and Maharatta countries. The Turco-Iranian race, a result of fusion of Turkish and Iranian elements, came later and mingled with the people of the north. India assimilated these groups, without such suicidal conflicts as throng the pages of European history even unto the present times. This process of ethnic assimilation is still at work, and India continues to gain accession of energy through these biological mutations, however slow they may be. This mingling of races has given India a sense of unity, fervent, persistent and pure that we do not come across in any other part of the world. Spatial propinquity of these various groups cannot explain their spirit of tolerance of one another. European nations, of fewer ethnic strains, living in an area equal to that of India, owning allegiance to a common faith, Christianity, have never attained such unity. But this racial fusion was kept within limits. Its slow and ordered progress enriched her cultural and spiritual life. The present-day cleavages of communities are cultural, not racial. It is the working out of this Vision of Oneness in the nation's life that constitutes the core of her history.

**Environments, race and genius**

These two factors, the environmental and the ethnological, reacted favourably on the biological organism of the Indian masses as a whole. The mountains made the race sturdy, the bringing of the virgin soil under the plough evoked all the virtues of the pioneer, while cross-fertilization of various ethnic groups improved the quality of the stock. It will be noticed that the region where the racial fusion has been at its highest, South India, genius has burst forth in a rich efflorescence. The great Acharyas, scientists, artists, bhaktas were born in the South, while the rugged North devoted its energies to assimilating the aliens that came into the country from time to time.

**Unity between nature and man**

But the process of racial unification, it is important to remember, was kept in control through a carefully planned social organization, and nature aided in the task of evolving an appropriate outlook on life. Nature works in India with a rhythm. It sends the monsoons to different provinces with clockwork regularity. Rains and rivers irrigate the land, feed the farm and the forest, the animal and the man. The tropical climate favours an attitude of relaxation. In India, man and nature lived in harmony. The early Aryan settlers, whose culture gained ascendancy over that of others by reason of its supremacy in valour and values, sought unity with nature with a becoming reverence. India's primeval forests of majestic beauty gave shelter and food, inspired awe

and reverence and served as retreats for those who sought a life of contemplation. Nature was not subordinated to considerations of commerce. Man and nature were parts of one life. It was here that were laid the foundations of that typically Indian temperament that seeks a principle to give coherence and unity to a confounding medley of disparate events and facts, that looks for the vision and the voice of the One, even when it lives in and is subordinate to the demands of the many. The Vedas are the first utterances of the elect of the human race, and they symbolise the highest summits of human thought aspiring for unity with the Eternal, as no other literature in the world does. Yoga became the scientific technique of resolving all conflicts between man's various, wayward capacities and urges and of shortening the distance between him and the Eternal.<sup>1</sup>

### **Fellowship of faiths**

To this combination of forces and factors should be added that of religion. India became the meeting ground of races, but also of their religions and philosophies. She gave birth to three great religions of the world, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, while she gave shelter to Christianity before Europe took kindly to it, and to Zoroastrianism in the eleventh century. She yielded ground slowly to Islam that came to it as a political weapon and in the yielding

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that all the major religions have arisen in the warm regions of the world. The cold countries of Europe and America are not conducive to a life of contemplation for large groups of people, which is vitally important for affording the appropriate conditions for birth of prophets and teachers.

assimilated it to her ethos. In all these religions, she emphasised the greatest common denominator, the life-principle, leaving the details and differences in modes of worship to be worked out by the followers of each faith. All these religions became windows into the Celestial Shrine, Visions of One God. The multiplicity of faiths is a source of India's spiritual strength, which no other nation possesses.

### **India's civilization based on principles of universal order**

These, then, are the keys with the aid of which we may venture to understand the mystery that is India. Geographical, ethnological, psychological, biological and spiritual forces have acted and reacted on each other and given birth to psychic unity that forms the substratum of her nationality. India was called the *Bharat Varsha*, the "country that embraces all in one bond," and she was selected to become the embodiment of that immutable, eternal, law of the universe, *Sanatana Dharma*—dharma is that which "holds together,"—which makes the universes run in their orbits. India was assigned the task of building an enduring civilization on principles of this universal order. It was this principle of dharma, synthesis, balance, harmonious relationship between various forces and factors, between various individuals and groups, that came to be the corner-stone of her civilization.

This is the Idea that is India. Her sages and seers, saints and scientists, philosophers and statesmen, poets and priests, artists and workers have sought to sense this India and live their daily lives in the light



that She shed on their paths. India has been known as the *moksha-bhumi* and *karma-bhumi*, the Land of Liberty, spiritual and temporal, gained through service of fellowmen. India was not thought of as a *bhoga-bhumi*, a pleasure-resort for a single life-time allowed to the mortals. India is the only country in the world where civilization has revolved round this fundamental spiritual nucleus, where the greatest concentration of intellect has centred round this basic human problem of existence, which is Life Divine, not for a few elect of the race but for the common man, not in some far-off future or in an uncertain heaven, but here and now.

To an unbiased student of history, a glance at India's story cannot fail to convince that she was destined for this great experiment in nation-building, of being a pioneer in the art of complete, human, civilized living. Notwithstanding being the battleground of many divergent forces and ideas, India has moved consistently to the fulfilment of her destiny. It was in the light of this vision that she built a great civilization, developed educational institutions, organized social life, encouraged arts, experimented in monarchies, empires and republics, scaled the highest summits of human thought, produced superb works of art and literature, and, with a majestic generosity, carried forth the message of her aspirations and achievements to the various countries, both in the East and in the West, that came within the orbit of her influence. It is to the discovery and understanding of this Idea that we shall turn our attention in the following pages.

## **II. FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN CULTURE**

### **I. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY**

#### **Unity between nature and man**

The civilization of India had its birth in the bosom of Mother Nature. At the time when her history began, India was a land of vast forests. Those forests not only administered to the daily needs of the people, giving them shelter from heat of the sun and ravages of storms, green pastures for cattle and abundant fuel for sacrificial and architectural purposes, but they also made a permanent impression on the minds of the people. Their religion had no aggressive frontiers; no walls of brick and mortar set people apart from one another. The people lived in one vast embrace of nature, as one family. There was no "divide and rule" mentality, no aggressive, ruthless exploitation of nature, no assertive individualism which has been the characteristic of civilizations nurtured within the city walls. There was harmony within and without, and inward realization of the Eternal became dominant aspiration of people's lives. There was an attitude of identification, not conflict, a search of the One, not of the many.

#### **The Vedas**

The early thought of the Aryans, as it is available in the Vedas, is a sublime attempt of man at synthesis, at seeing life as a whole. There are four Vedas :

the Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sam Veda and the Atharva Veda. Each of these Vedas is divided into three parts : the Samhitas, written in the earliest classical Sanskrit ; the Brahmanas, dealing with ceremonialism, and the Upanishads, also known as the Vedanta, containing philosophical speculation.

A. *The Samhitas*.—The Indian traditional interpretation has made out the Samhitas and the Brahmanas as compilations of complicated ritual, while the western scholarship has relegated them into the background, considering them as babblings of a primitive humanity, bereft of philosophical significance. The Orientalists, both the Indian as well as the western, have therefore begun with the Upanishads, while the Samhitas and the Brahmanas have remained unexplored. A closer scrutiny of these sections of the Vedas, however, reveals in them a body of material which came to be systematically elaborated and applied to the various aspects of life in later times and gave birth to natural and social sciences, as we shall see presently.

### **Various planes and dimensions of consciousness**

The Vedic thinkers had a fairly advanced knowledge of nature and of the problems of life. Their analysis of the phenomenal led them to the study of the various substances and elements, such as earth, water, fire and air. Out of a sum-total of these the world came to be. These elements were correlated with the various planes of being or dimensions of consciousness. Earth represented this world of physical existence. The plane above this was that of water, *ap*, presided over by Indra. The next

one was of fire, *tejas*, the heaven-world, with Savitri, the Sun-God, and so on. There are other gods or devas, such as Asvins, Surya, Varuna, Usha, Pushan, Maruts, Rudra, Soma, Vishnu, etc. But behind them all was the central principle of Sat, the One.

### **The Vedic Cosmology**

The Vedic thinkers realized early the nature of this central reality, which was not many, but one. "The Real is one ; the learned call it by many names." This Sat was the Brahman, Hiranyagarbha, Prajapati, Vishwakarma, Brihaspati. The One was beyond all opposites, being and non-being. In the discovery and the Vision of the One lay the surest foundations of an enduring civilization.

The One desired to be many and the worlds came to be. In the act of self-affirmation of the One, came to be the many. The duality of I and not-I is the substratum of purusha and prakriti. The One is ever performing this *tapas*, this meditation of being the many. The story of this duality to be gathered up into the One is the subject-matter of history of all creation.

But this world of many is not unreal. It has a plan and a purpose ; it is not a phantom. It is a projection of the One by the power of his maya. The various gods are the agents of creation, the world itself is made of the material of the body of the One ; it is bodying forth of this intelligence. The Vedic seers had the earliest beginnings of a sound cosmology.

### Psychology

They were also aware of the problem of the individual and his daily life. They were conscious of the workings of the human mind. One of these poets exclaims : " I do not know what kind of thing I am ; mysterious, bound, my mind wanders." The life of the personality was seen to be threefold : the physical, the emotional and the mental. The physical body is the instrument of work in this world of action. The next is the emotional nature of man. Here Indra presides, who kills Virat because the latter prevents *waters* from flowing ; man must kill vrisbaba the sprinkler, the bull of desires, heavy and un-intelligent. Man should have had enough of soma, the surfeit of desire ; soma is the drink of Indra living in this world. He should break through this world of desire and enter the world of light (tejas) by means of knowledge (jnan). It is then that he will have a taste of " heaven," " fragrance of holy life." The prayer of the Vedic thinker is : " May Dashikravan make our mouths fragrant. May he take us across our lives." This fragrance is born of sweet fruits of wisdom (madhuvidya). Madhu is linked with Asvin, the god of the heaven-world. His vehicle is a fleet-winged horse, which was more intelligent than bull and stood for transcendence of time and space. Man can reach peace through jnan. But jnan is an esoteric knowledge. It imposes obligations and responsibility, any breach of which must land a man in lunacy : ' his head will burst '.

The Asvins paid the price by tapas and attained wisdom.

### Ethics

We see in the Vedas a well-developed conception of ethical conduct. Rta was the order of the universe. It represented the regularity of natural phenomenon, the diurnal march of the sun, the movements of the moon, the alternation of the seasons. As Radhakrishnan explains: "Everything that is ordered in the universe has Rta for its principle. It corresponds to the universals of Plato. The world of experience is a shadow or reflection of the Rta, the permanent reality which remains unchanged in all the welter of mutation. The universal is prior to the particular, and so the Vedic seer thinks that the Rta exists before the manifestation of all phenomenon. . . . The Maruts come from afar from the seat of Rta. Heaven and earth are what they are by reason of Rta. . . . Soon this cosmic order becomes the settled will of a supreme god, the law of morality and righteousness as well. We see in the conception of the Rta a development from the physical to the divine."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, man's action were to be harmonious, representing the order of universe. There is implicit here the concept of cause and effect. A life of virtue is enjoined, if the individual wants the Higher Powers to help him. He should feed the hungry, succour the needy, cultivate kindness to those below him,

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, Sir S., *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 79.

including the plant and the animal. The Vedic Aryans were gentle and sensitive. "Oh axe, do not hurt him ; be gentle to him," is the prayer of one when he is cutting a tree. All anti-social conduct, such as untruth, gambling, theft, seduction, adultery, sorcery, witchcraft, was eschewed. The Devas favoured the just and the true, punished the untruthful and the hypocrite. The latter lived in the world of darkness.

A life of controlled senses, purified desires and mind, of righteous action was the way to contact the world of the Devas and have their vision. Then alone one becomes a rishi, a seer. Archanana, a man of average abilities, developed this power of contacting the Deva world by tapas and became a rishi. This world of the Devas and inner life is open to all ; it is not reserved for the elect. Desire to be born in that world does not spring from fear. Devas are beneficent.

One of the ways of transcending this world of duality was through right approach to, and union with, nature, the handiwork of cosmos. Man must enter this world in a spirit of reverence, not for purposes of exploitation and physical comfort. Some of the songs, uttered by these Vedic seers, in praise of nature may only be matched in their exquisite delicacy of thought and sensitiveness of feeling by such modern poets as Wordsworth, Shelly and Keats. Man must learn the secrets of nature. He must enter the world of elements of water, air, earth and fire, by offering them proper oblations. The Devas of these elements take the devout by the hand and

unveil to his friendly gaze their mysteries, give him control over the elements. Detachment, control of craving for the good things of the world and fasting were some of the requisites for entering this world of mystic union with life.

### **Self and life after death**

The self, the atman, survives after death. The nature of the self is sat-chit-ananda. It is eternal, the inner ruler immortal. It is the micro-cosmic reflection of the Universal Brahma. It leaves the body after death, goes to pitriloka, the abode of the dead. From there, it goes to a higher world where it enjoys the fruits of its deeds; this is the world of causes, ishtaputra. The ninth mandala of the Rig Veda gives a beautiful prayer of a man who faces death.

After assimilating the lessons of his former existence in the heaven-world, the man returns. But while re-incarnation is a necessity, it is not an inevitable doom of man. He can escape it. There is a pathway to the region of immortality, which "Yama was the first to find," followed by Angiras Rishi.

### **Sociology**

When man is a part of the whole, shares the nature of the Universal Being and has access to the various planes of being, it is obvious that he should live in this world in harmonious relations with his fellowmen. The human social order should reflect the rhythm of the cosmic order of which it is a part. All men were not equal in their native endowments,



nor did they wear the same "racial uniform." Varna, classification of human beings, was a social necessity. The Vedic thinkers saw the need of social synthesis and based it on the organic unity of the body of the Cosmic Being. "When Purusha sacrificed Himself and became the many, the brahmans came from his mouth, the kshatriyas from his arms, the vaishyas from his thighs and the sudras from his feet." The Sociology of these early thinkers of India shocks us by its modernity and scientific character. They anticipate Auguste Comte by thousands of years !

### **Dangers of misuse of knowledge**

But the unseemly side of human life was not ignored. All powers gained through the opening up of channels with the higher realms could be misused by man. The primitive urges of man had to be reckoned with and when they dragged him downwards, he became a partner in black magic. The Atharva Veda deals with this side of life and should be understood to utter a word of warning. The esoteric knowledge placed power in the hands of man which should be utilized in service of his fellowmen. The Tantras and Agamas were later developments of the Atharva Veda, but their purpose, as Sir John Woodroffe maintains, was the spiritual regeneration of man, and not his degradation.

*B. The Brahmanas : esotericism of the ceremonial.*—The Brahmana portion of the Vedas contains a considerable body of scientific material. There are elaborate instructions for proper performance of the ritual. The Vedic thinkers understood the scientific

significance of the ceremony. Consequently, great emphasis was placed on accurate enunciation of the liturgy recited at the time of the sacred ritual. Ritual was esotericism of the symbol. Every detail connected with ritual must be done with meticulous accuracy, since a misplaced syllable or an inappropriate gesture may nullify the purpose, neutralize the esoteric and æsthetic significance of the whole performance.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the Brahmanas was to teach man to establish right relations between the various social groups, between himself and the various worlds which surrounded him and develop his powers along right lines.

### **Ethics**

The Brahmanas accepted the possibility of human error and provided for man's shortcomings by yoking knowledge to the general human welfare and by minimising dangers of misapplication. Duties of man were carefully defined. He owed debts to the Gods, the sages, the ancestors, fellow beings and the lower orders of being. A daily offering to all was a duty. The Vedic conception of One Life found its fulfilment in daily tasks and was not a matter of blind acceptance of theological dicta. As Radha-

<sup>1</sup> According to H. P. Blavatsky, a very slight change in the original utterance of Jesus Christ on the Cross has given to the western world a religion of gloominess and depression. What Christ actually said was: "Oh God! How dost Thou glorify me!" and not, "Oh God, why has Thou forsaken me?" The necessity for accuracy of recitation of mantras may be realized by bearing in mind the playing of an orchestra of a hundred instruments. One false note by a player may throw the whole orchestra out of gear and produce disharmony.

krishnan rightly remarks of the ethics of the Brahmanas : "In the Satapatha Brahmana, the sacrifice of all things, *sarvamedha*, is taught as a means to the attainment of spiritual freedom. Godliness is of course the first duty. It does not consist in the mechanical performance of fixed ritual. It consists in praise and good works. Godliness means trying to be divine as much as possible. Truth-speaking is an essential part of godliness. It is a religious and moral duty. Agni is the lord of vows, and Vak the lord of speech. Both will be displeased if truthfulness is not observed."<sup>1</sup>

### Ashrama dharma

The great truths of life must be realized, lived in daily life, and the group is under obligation to recognize the claims of the individual. It should provide opportunities for his early training, daily meditation and subsequent realization of these realities. Life of an individual was, therefore, divided into four stages or ashramas, those of the student, the householder, the forest-dweller and the ascetic. To the concept of varna-dharma (duties of the group) of the Samhitas, which we have just discussed, the Brahmanas added those of the ashrama-dharma (duties of the individual). The Vedic thinkers sought to yoke man's energies to the one "enduring quest," the life of the Eternal.

C. *The Upanishads*.—We now come to the third part of the Vedas, the Upanishads. Great philosophers, both in the East and the West, have acclaimed

<sup>1</sup> *Opus cit.*, p. 131.

the Upanishads as the highest achievement of human thought. The secret of their excellence lies in the fact that while accepting the validity of the many, the *prakriti*, they try to gather it up into the wisdom of the One, the Brahman. They form a point of conjunction between this science of synthesis (*apara vidya*), and the knowledge of the many (*para vidya*), applied sciences and arts, pertaining to the daily life of the individual and the group.<sup>1</sup>

The Upanishads emphasise this wisdom of the One, the pure knowledge. They deal with metaphysics. There is, in them, a shift in emphasis from the objective to the subjective reality. But the understanding of the phenomenal world is not ignored. The various planes of nature, the significance of nature's elements, their interaction incarnating into this world of name and form, the nature of atman as distinguished from body, the various modes of consciousness, such as those of waking, sleep, dreamless sleep and quiscence, the relation of atman with Brahman, the doctrine of maya, reincarnation, the three paths of liberation, of wisdom, devotion and action, the condition of freedom, the question of ethical conduct, all these form the subject-matter of the Upanishads.

This, then, is the problem to which the Vedic seers addressed themselves. They touched every phase of

<sup>1</sup> The words *apara* and *para* are not intended to represent grades of reality; there is no implication of the vertical in them. All knowledge is one. The words stand for two orders of reality, the wisdom of the One, Who pervades the universe, and the application of this wisdom through analytical understanding to the purpose and the plan of the many.

human life, in this world and the next, and saw life as a whole. The One becomes the many in this world of name and form, and the realization of this One, the resolution of all relativities into an all-embracing unity, was the chief problem of life, and the earnestness and sublime passion of the search of these Vedic seers set a stamp on the whole thought and history of India for successive ages. We catch in their sweet sonorous utterances, couched in a language of surpassing beauty, a steady and persistent attempt to seek out the One in which all creation lived, moved and had its being. We see in their attempts to understand the universe and its problems a sublime attempt at synthesis, an integrated approach to life. They saw life as a whole and the inter-relatedness of all existence was a living reality with them. Here were laid the foundations of thought that later came to be refined and elaborated into various scientific, natural, biological, philosophical and sociological disciplines. The Vedas represent the earliest attempt of humanity to envisage the foundations of an enduring civilization. The truths discovered were applied to the problems of daily life of the individual and the group. When divested of the archaic mode of expression and given a verbal vesture easily understandable to the modern mind, the Vedic and Upanishadic thought appears, in many respects, far in advance of the thought-currents of to-day. What preceded the Vedas, we do not know. It is their modernity, the fullness and vigour of their expression, that has been a source of perennial surprise to the western scholars. As Barnett admits :

“In India, there is no twilight before the dawn. In the darkness, the eastern sky suddenly flushes, and the ruddy edge of the morning sun swiftly leaps upon the horizon. It is so with the history of the great people which led the van of Indian culture. They have left no record of the slow and painful struggle onwards through lessening darkness of barbarism towards the light of civilization. The earliest thing that we know is their Rig Veda and the culture to which the Rig Veda bears testimony. And this culture is already strong, rich in potentiality, typically Indian.”<sup>1</sup>

It is here that were laid the foundations of Indian civilization that still endures. The Vedic seers plumbed the depths of human existence and their discoveries have dominated our life and thought. It is because of this Vision of the One, the understanding of the whole, recorded in the utterances of these Elect of the human race, that India goes back again and again to the Vedas and their injunctions. The Vedas must be accepted as the final word, the ultimate authority; they are the end of all knowledge. All life must hark back to this One Reality; there is nothing outside it. The development and purpose of India as a nation can only be understood in terms of these fundamentals of Vedic thought, of man's aspiration to penetrate into a life deeper than this. Rise and fall of empires and dynasties is but a game of hide and seek of the One with the many in the history of this hoary land.

<sup>1</sup> Barnett, L. D., *The Antiquities of India*.

### Later developments

The pioneering period of the Vedas culminated in a more settled form of life, and the great body of Vedic truths came to receive a more refined and elaborate treatment in the Upanishads. Jainism, Buddhism, and Six Schools of Thought followed. The scientific problems, dealing with the evolutionary processes and archæology of the universe, found expression in an entertaining form in the Puranas, while the great Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, outlined practical application of the Vedic idealism to the daily lives of great men. Dramas and other literature, light and serious, arose. Various sciences, essential for the wholesome life of the individual and the group, came into being. Medicine, music and dancing, archery and military science; architecture, science of phonetics, science of grammar, science of etymology, astrology and astronomy, and science of ritual, appeared.<sup>1</sup> Highly developed social sciences, such as psychology of sex, economics, politics and sociology took definite shape.<sup>2</sup> All knowledge was applied to building up an integrated social organization, consisting of institutions, such as those of education, economics, politics, religion, art, etc., to form an organic whole. It was a highly advanced type of thought that formed the fundamental philo-

<sup>1</sup> (1) Ayur Veda; (2) Gandharva Veda; (3) Dhanur Veda; (4) Sthaptya or Silpa Veda. These together made up the Upa Vedas. (1) Siksha; (2) Chhanda; (3) Vyakarna; (4) Nirkuta; (5) Jyotisha; (6) Kalpa. These together formed the Veda Angas, the Limbs of the Vedas. <sup>2</sup> Then, there were: Kama Shastra, Artha Shastra, Niti Shastra and Dharma Shastra.

sophy of every social institution, and the interpreters of Indian culture and historians have done considerable harm to the cause by studying the various aspects of this glorious Indian culture in parts. An inadequate appreciation of the sublimity of this Vedic heritage has led them to erroneous interpretation of the subsequent periods of Indian culture, while ignorance of the few fundamental sociological laws of cultural evolution and change has been responsible for their isolated, partisan, analytical picture of this age. Their interpretation is not only misleading but devoid of contribution to problems of life. Our attempt in this chapter will be to review briefly the horizontal interlocking of all these aspects of Indian culture, acting and reacting upon each other, reinforcing each other's usefulness, but deriving their validity from the one source, the Vedas, the end of all knowledge that reveals the Vision of the One. We shall continue with India's religious and philosophical quest, and the two major religions that first appeared in India were Jainism and Buddhism.

### Jainism

Jainism is contemporary of Buddhism. It has its own distinct system of *logic*. Knowledge is of five kinds: sense-perception, symbolic, supernormal, mental and unified knowledge (kevaljnanam). It is with the aid of the last that we can see everything in its proper perspective and see the whole. Jain *psychology* posits dualism of body and mind. The five senses are exteriorised instruments of the one Jiva. Reincarnation is accepted. Jain analysis of



the concept of dharma is very subtle and interesting. Freedom or moksha lies in triratna, the three jewels of faith, knowledge of truth and its pursuit in perfect conduct. The *ethics* of Jainism emphasise five virtues : compassion, charity, honourable conduct unsoiled by any delinquency, chastity of thought and deed, and detachment from earthly pursuits. Jainism accepts the varna-dharma of the Vedas, emphasises character, subordinates heredity. Nirvana does not end in annihilation ; it is birth into blessedness. Siddha state is unconditioned ; causality has completed its work for the soul.

### **Buddhism**

Dharma, dhamma, synthesis, oneness, became the dominant note of Buddhism. Buddha emphasised dhamma as "the ancient way" the "Aryan path." He developed this Vedic and Upanishadic concept, adapted it to the problems of individual and social life, emphasised its ethical universalism, putting aside the controversial aspects of the prevalent thought. Buddhism is a continuation of the eternal search for light and truth on which the ancient seers and sages of India embarked ; Buddhism is not a freak in the Hindu pantheon.<sup>1</sup>

Buddha saw life as a whole, accepted the existence of suffering, discovered a cause of its continuance, admitted the possibility of overcoming it and pointed the way. The universe is a momentary complex,

<sup>1</sup> The present-day Ceylonese, unaccustomed with the thought of India or the methods of modern scientific research, insist on perpetuating an unnecessary controversy about original character of the teachings of Buddha.

it is in perpetual flux, with nothing permanent in it. Buddha contended the false views of atman. He rejected the current notion of personality, the reality of the surface consciousness. He knew that there was something beyond this phenomenal or empirical self, but declined to discuss its nature. He gave the eightfold path of righteousness : right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right concentration, right rapture. These virtues, when lived and practised properly, will strike away at the ten fetters which obstruct the path of an arhat.

### **The Six Schools : The Nyaya**

We now come to the well-known Six Schools of Thought. It is more appropriate to call them Schools of Thought, rather than systems of Philosophy, since the modern connotation of the word Philosophy is its extreme intellectualism. All these Indian Schools attempt a synthesis of logic, ethics, psychology, metaphysics and science. The Nyaya of Gautama begins with sixteen topics of discussion. In the course of his system, he discusses the nature of argument and proof, the nature and relationship of body, mind and soul. The material cause of the universe is parmanu (atoms). The atoms are permanent and eternal. God is omniscient and omnipresent, He is separate from souls. This School no doubt lays great emphasis on the method by means of which truth may be discovered, but is not restricted to problems of logic. It goes into the nature of the intellect, the world of nature, articulated

sound, variety, genus, individuality, forms of knowledge other than the logical, reincarnation, ethical conduct and final liberation. Schelegel maintains that Nyaya was "an idealism constructed with a purity and logical consistency of which there are few instances, to which Greeks never attained."<sup>1</sup>

### **The Vaisheshka**

The Vaisheshka is, literally, a system of particulars. It emphasises the individual character of imperceptible souls and atoms. It formulates general character of observed things in a scientific manner. It reduces the contents of the universe to six categories : substance, quality, motion, individuality or difference, relationship, non-existence. We see in the physical theory of Vaisheshka the science of Brahmanas and Upanishads more closely analysed and systematised. The analysis of the phenomenal universe, the theory of propagation of sound, the statement with regard to light and heat being different forms of one essential substance, are surprisingly modern. There is a logical and consistent picture of the physical environment in and through which the soul can live its life of experience. Man's activities are voluntary and involuntary, the distinction of morality applies to the former. There

<sup>1</sup> Reverting the statement of Sir William Jones, we may say that Nyaya is the predecessor of the Peripatetic School of Greece ; Vaisheshka of the Ionic ; Sankhya of the Italic ; Yoga of the Stoic, and Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta of the Platonic. So, Aristotle corresponds with Gautama ; Thales with Kanada ; Pythagoras with Kapila ; Zeno with Patanjali ; Jaimini with Socrates and Plato with Vyasa. But the Indian sages preceded their western disciples by hundreds of years !

are certain duties—and the School lists twelve of them—which are universal, irrespective of time and place. The specific duties belong to the caste. We must transcend the realm of contraries, of likes and dislikes. Pursuit of truth will secure release from karma and the wheel of life and death.

### The Sankhya

The Sankhya School assumes the reality of the subject and the object, purusha and prakriti. It takes up analysis of both and presents a theory of evolution, more scientific and logical than its modern analogue. It posits twenty-five substances which explain the worlds of life and form. These are : purusha ; prakriti ; buddhi, higher reason ; ahankara, sense of selfhood ; five tanmatras of sound, touch, smell, form and taste ; manas ; five senses ; five organs of action ; five elements, ether, air, light, water, earth.<sup>1</sup>

It is the push and pressure of purusha on prakriti that gives birth to the evolutionary ladder. The desire of the self to see produced the organ of sight, and so on. Thus Kapila, the author of this system, anticipates Lamarck by thousands of years. Sankhya posits three qualities (gunas) of matter, the interaction of which explains differences of manifestation. There is no vital distinction between the inorganic and the organic worlds, between the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human life is one.

<sup>1</sup> Schlegel, *History of Literature*, p. 123.

But evolution is not a blind impulse of nature to keep up its movement. Prakriti and gunas cannot act except through the presence or propinquity of the energising element, the purusha, the self. Sankhya here is ahead of Darwinism, which has made a shambles of civilization. The power or inspiration of purusha creates the mechanisms, the mental, the vital and the physical. Kapila's theory of evolution is not mechanistic, but idealistic. In Sankhya, mind is a part of the evolutionary process, as any other organ. The spirit is free and nature of body and mind is determined by the gunas of matter. The purusha is not affected by death of the body. Reincarnation is accepted by this School. Freedom from it will be possible only when this duality is transcended and the purity of being realized. Thus, Kapila reiterates the truths of the Vedas that separateness of the many is an illusion, that mind and matter do not exhaust the entire range of life, that there is a way to the imper-turbable quiet of eternity. Sankhya literally means "understanding togetherness," a vision of synthesis of life and form.

### **The School of Yoga**

The Sankhyan analysis of the physical world and of the nature of the self led to search for the technique by means of which this knowledge could be applied by the individual in daily life. This culminated in Patanjali's School of Yoga. Yoga is mentioned even in the Vedas! Yoga, like the previous Schools, is a synthesis of the ethical, the physical and the meta-

physical aspects, leading up to the final liberation. The *ethical* steps are compassion, truthfulness, continence, honesty, renunciation of material pursuits; cleanliness, contentment, purification, study and faith. These are "categorical imperatives" and admit of no compromise. Personal discipline is essential for redirection of our consciousness. The *physical* steps are a convenient posture for meditation, purification of the vital organism through breathing exercises and orderly awakening of psychic centres in one's being, abstraction of mind from demands of senses. The last or the *metaphysical* steps teach the techniques of exploration of all nuances of the subject selected for concentration, contraction of the region of exploration through meditation and contacting of, and abiding in, the inner centre of being, which is contemplation. Yoga knows the relationship between body and mind, the existence of the psychic powers<sup>1</sup> and awakening of which leads to mastery of super-physical powers of clairvoyance, etc. These powers do not infringe any of nature's laws; they are miracles because we do not know the astrophysical and cosmic constitution of matter or the powers of the human mind. But the School of Yoga warns that these powers are obstacles to the realization

<sup>1</sup> These have been discussed in the preceding chapter. The extra sensory perception is an elementary form of the powers discussed in Yoga. These powers, arising out of proper concentration, meditation and contemplation, enable one to know the inmost secret of things, to develop physical vigour, to be able to read another person's thoughts, to know the past, the present and the future, to become invisible, to know the concealed and the obscure, to increase one's weight, to float in the air, to gain all one's desires, etc.

of perfect contemplation and freedom. Patanjali neither subscribes to the rigours of asceticism nor to the development of these powers. It is Raja Yoga, the King of all disciplines, that leads to moksha. Powers can be put to anti-social use, while the aim of this Yoga is to transform the whole man, to discipline his body, to purify his mind, to touch the very foundations of his being. While Sankhya gives knowledge of the evolutionary process, Yoga may be said to indicate the method of hastening it.

### **The Two Mimamsa**

We now come to the last two Schools of thought, the Purva and the Uttara Mimamsa, the Schools of ceremonialism and tradition (karma) and Vedantic monism. We find in these Schools a renewed attempt to systematise the truths of the Vedic thought. The Purva Mimamsa seek to effect a synthesis between life and action through the ritual ; dharma is again its chief concept. It accepts the final authority of the Vedas, affirms the reality of the soul, reconciles action with knowledge, discusses the sources of knowledge, which are perception, inference, testimony, comparison, implication, non-apprehension and rumour. It analyses the contents of each in order to arrive at truth. A recognition of the limitations of human nature leads the author to question the validity of intuition of the Yoga School and assert supremacy of the intellectual comprehension of reality. The Mimamsa attempts the task of understanding the esoteric significance of the ritual given in the

Brahmanas and lays down rules of its proper performance. Thus it came to be the foundation of social tradition, commanding the force of law. It also accepts the existence of the soul as distinct from the body and the senses. This soul synthesises the sense-data, but is more than the sum-total of senses, since loss of a sense does not destroy its integrity. It persists through all changes. The *ethics* of the School is based on the Vedic texts. It prescribes rules of ceremonial for all occasions, recommends conduct of great men as examples to follow. The final purpose of life is to transcend the duality of dharma and adharma and realization of atman and Brahman. This is a positive state, and not one of non-existence.

The last School is that of the Uttra Mimamsa, the sole purpose of which is the philosophical discussion of Brahman as the cardinal reality. The Vedanta Sūtras of Badarayana (cir. 200) B.C. are devoted to understanding Brahman, the soul and the world and their inter-relationship, objections to the view propounded by the teacher, practical ways and means of reaching the knowledge of Brahman, the doctrines of karma and reincarnation, and finally, the fruits of this knowledge. This School may be said to continue the argument of the Upanishads in a more detailed form. The supremacy of this School lies in the illustrious galaxy of its commentators it has claimed : Sankara, Bhaskara, Yadavaprakasa, Ramanuja, Kesava, Nilkantha, Madhava, Baladeva, Vallabha and Vijñānabikṣu.



**The fundamental characteristics of Indian thought**

These, then, are the bare outlines of the Vedic thought, elaborated and expounded with consummate skill, profundity of knowledge and inner vision by the Jain, the Buddhist and the Six Schools of Thought. They have many features in common. Excepting Buddhism, all accept the validity of the Vedas, since the whole problem of existence is envisaged therein, from scientific, religious and philosophical points of view, and all that is left for us is to understand its immensity and make the teachings a part and parcel of our lives. We can only study the problem anew, resolve it into its component parts, put it together and thus catch a new vision, a darshana. All these systems grew simultaneously and there is no order of succession. They contain references to each other. Their systematisation and reduction to writing may have taken place in later times, though much before the beginnings of Christian era.

They are all synthesis of logic, ethics, biology, psychology and metaphysics. Each system faces the question of the validity of knowledge and the means of knowing. Authority, inference and intuition are accepted by all, but the last is given preference. It is through intuition that the vision of One can be gained. There are dimensions of consciousness : simple consciousness that characterises the animal, self-consciousness of the man, and super-consciousness of the superman, the great and illumined soul.

All the Schools look at man as a whole. The Reality transcends what we see extended in

space and time. The world-rhythms, kalpas and manvantras, mark stages of growth of the human race. The purpose of the world of the many is to be gathered up to the One. Salvation, moksha, is man's attempt to gain his wholeness, integrity, and release from the rounds of births and deaths. This realization is essential. A merely moral conduct, conformity with the social code, may give us security, but man must transcend the world of opposites. Purity of personal life is enjoined by all the Schools. They all accept hierarchical social organizations, with appropriate values, varna-ashrama dharma. The universe is a manifestation of cosmic order, Rta, dharma.

All these Schools of thought had begun to assume systematised garbs at the time of Buddha (circ. 600 B.C.). From that ancient past to the present day, this spiritual quest of the One has received India's continued homage. There have been alternating periods of quiet and intense philosophical activity, but the search has continued. The lights have flickered, but never faded, so that even to-day, attempts are made to penetrate the esoteric sublimity of India's sacred teachings.<sup>1</sup>

India sought synthesis, *dharma*, unity, enfolding the visible and the invisible worlds, the inorganic and the organic orders of creation, the past and the future, the individual and the group. The various facets or aspects of the One were synthesised into a unified system of knowledge, the Vedas, beyond which the reason cannot go ; the Vedas were the climax of

<sup>1</sup> The best contribution in this field comes from Madam H. P. Blavatsky, the Founder of The Theosophical Society, Adyar, Madras, India.

human achievement. According to Chhandogya Upanishad, Narada narrates to Sanat Kumar some of the subjects he has studied and wants to know what remains. He has studied the four Vedas, the Itahasas, the Puranas, Grammar, Rituals, the Science of Numbers, Physics, Logic, Polity, Chronology, Sciences of elements, archery, astronomy, the science of antipodes and the fine arts which were supposed to include "science of making essences, dancing, singing, music, architecture and painting." But there is another Science, the Science of the One, which enfolds all these, that should be studied, replies the Sanat Kumara.

Thus, the physics and the metaphysics were not isolated from each other. The many were synthesised into the One. Therefore it is that as in metaphysics, so in exact and natural sciences, India anticipated some of highest achievements of the modern thought. In India, religion became scientific and philosophical ; science received religious sanction and philosophic support, and philosophy became religious, with a practical bearing on the problems of daily life. Here lies the secret of India's uniqueness and greatness. India saw Reality as a whole ; there were no partition walls in the world of the One. With this universality, humanity and sublime idealism India offered a challenge to time.

Indian culture has known periods of change, initiated by the explosive action of religion, philosophy and science. These forces acted and reacted on each other. We have attempted a very brief outline of the ideological currents that shaped India's culture,

but science took an equally vigorous part in the drama. Science, as we have stated already, was yoked to the social well-being of people and not to the annihilation of the human race as is the case in the West to-day. To India's achievements in this world of science we shall now turn our attention.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author is indebted to Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy* and Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy* for factual material, but the interpretation is his own. He maintains that with the aid of knowledge of Sociology, we shall arrive at correct interpretation of the Vedas and discover therein solutions of various problems that baffle some of the greatest minds of to-day.

## II. THE SCIENCES

### **Science woven into philosophic thought**

The study and cultivation of exact sciences in India was a part of search for truth and reality, which we referred to in the last section. From Vedic times onwards, investigations into the realm of the spiritual included those of the physical. The whole of the philosophical literature which we have just surveyed is replete with and based on some of the tenets of science as we understand it to-day. It has been an unmitigated calamity for India that it were the philologists, both eastern and western, who became the first interpreters of her ancient Sanskrit literature. Highly trained in their fields of study, steadfast in their devotion to details of research, they spent their entire lives in presenting to the world anatomy of Sanskrit philology, which was given the semblance of being the Indian philosophy of life. Brought up in an age when analysis was the predominant passion of the human mind and science was dazzling the world with its impressive inventions in the West, India's Sanskrit literature came to be interpreted in an apologetic tone and from the standpoint of the western achievements. Some of the sublimities of the Hindu thought, far ahead of the prevailing times, were considered as oddities belonging to a primitive past. The great Orientalists were philologists, not philosophers. Occasionally, there was a combination of both, as in the case of Max Muller. But he too had his limitations, and there was not one scholar who added

knowledge of science to his intellectual equipment and could give a correct picture of India's achievements in sciences. Rarer still was an individual who could claim to possess personal knowledge and experience of the esoteric truths of India, who could dare to challenge the philologists and their interpretations. Such an individual in the last century was Madam H. P. Blavatsky, whose writings are veritable store-houses of wisdom, unfortunately still unexplored by students of Indian thought.

### **Indian approach to science**

Science, as we understand it now, had very early beginnings in India. As we have seen already, Sama and Atharva Vedas laid the foundations ; out of these grew up the Upa Vedas and Vedangas and the Six Systems of Thought. The growth of all these, philosophy, religion and science, it is imperative to remember, was simultaneous. These three acted in concert, enriched each other's content and served the individual and the society. It is a well-known sociological truism that a new trait of culture, invented or imported from outside, leads to a transformation of the whole culture-complex. Similarly, scientific investigations arose out of search for the Real in the world of the phenomenal, and the results fulfilled the purpose of the philosophic search and religious experience. When the physical is a part of the spiritual world, philosophy, religion and science become parts of one whole, and there is no problem of anti-social use of science. Purpose, value and ideal pervaded all the three.

**India's contributions to Mathematics**

Many a scientific achievement of to-day has an Indian ancestry. Kanada's Vaisheshika of atomic particularities has as many leanings towards scientific and mathematical approach as any modern school of philosophy that begins with analysis of matter. India therefore developed a highly advanced system of mathematics in very early times. The so-called Arabic numerals and the decimal system are India's gift to the world. The former are found in Asoka's Edicts, 256 B.C., and that is one thousand years before they first made their appearance in Arabic literature. But they had a much earlier history. As Laplace, the great mathematician said: "It is India that gave us the ingenious method of expressing all numbers by ten symbols, each receiving a value of position as we have an absolute value ; a profound and important idea which appears so simple to us now that we ignore its true merit. But its very simplicity, the great ease which it has lent to all computations, puts our arithmetic in the first rank of useful inventions ; and we shall appreciate the grandeur of this achievement the more when we remember that it escaped the genius of Archimedes and Apollonius, two of the greatest men produced by antiquity."

The Hindu mathematicians, Aryabhata and Brahmagupta, knew the decimal system long before it appeared in Arabia and Syria. The Buddhist missionaries from China took the decimal to their country, and Mahmud Ibn Moosali Khwaja Nizami, 850 A.D., introduced it to Baghdad. People who dis-

cussed the abstruse problems of moksha and nirvana and Nothing had no difficulty in discovering zero as a symbol, the most modest and valuable of all symbols ! Algebra, in spite of its Arabic name, is India's gift. The Indian mathematicians invented the radical sign and many algebraic symbols, developed the idea of negative quantity, formulated rules for permutations and combinations, found square-root of 2, and solved indeterminate equations to the second degree, one thousand years before Europe came to know of them. Geometry revealed the beauty and the symmetry of the Cosmos ; the Rta conception of the Vedas was its antecedent. Sir James Jeans is restating a Vedic truth when he says that the creator of the universe must be a geometrician. Pythagorean theorem was India's gift many centuries before Pythagoras. The Hindu mathematicians found the area of a triangle, a circle, a trapezium, calculated the relations of diameter to circumference. Bhaskara anticipated the differential calculus, Aryabhata prepared the table of sines. Surya Sidhanta gives a system of trigonometry far ahead than that of the Greeks. Astronomy had early beginnings in India. Astronomical observations in the Vedas are so accurately and scientifically recorded that the late Lokamanya Tilak was able to calculate the age and home of the Vedas ! Later writers systematised this knowledge and discussed sines, equations, eclipses of the sun and the moon, equinoxes, solstices, posited the sphericity of the earth and its diurnal revolution on its axis, expounded the theory of gravity, invented a compass made of an iron fish, floating in an oil vessel and pointing to the



north. They divided the sky into twelve zodiacal signs, made a calendar of twelve months, each month of thirty days, each day of thirty hours, with an additional month for every five years, calculated the diameter of the moon, the position of the poles, the motions of major stars, discussed their influence on human beings, and thus developed an amazingly accurate system of astrology. They estimated the age of the earth, calculated the kalpas and manvantras, geological and cosmic epochs, and posited the purpose of human history and endeavour.

### **To Physics**

The Indian scientists sought the truth of things, large and small. The galaxy was as important as an atom. Kanada's Vaisheshika laid the foundations for the science of physics. He maintained that heat and light were manifestations of one energy. Udyana maintained that the source of all heat was the sun, and Vachaspati anticipated Newton in interpreting light as radiation from an article striking the organ of vision. Musical notes and intervals were carefully and mathematically calculated and the Pythagorean Law was known many centuries before Pythagoras propounded it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to this law, the number of vibrations, and therefore the pitch of a note, varies inversely as the length of the string, between the points of attachment and touch. Thus, the Hindus conducted research in musical notations as successfully as does my illustrious friend, Dean Carl E. Seashore, of the Graduate School of the State University of Iowa, to-day. They were aware of the mathematical laws of music.

### **To Chemistry**

Investigations into the physical nature of matter was accompanied by research into its chemistry, and this was applied to medicine and industry. India achieved an early reputation for its supremacy in industrial arts involving knowledge and chemistry. Chemical excellence of cast iron was known in Chandragupta Maurya's time ; knowledge of burning of metals, such as steel, gold, silver, iron, etc., was considered a necessary qualification for a Minister of Mines by Kautaliya. Nagarjuna, in 200 B.C. wrote one whole volume on mercury. Chemical industries, such as dyeing, tanning, glass, cement, soap-making were developed long before the Christian era. Some of the Egyptian mummies were found wrapt in Indian muslins that were made and dyed in India. Early India possessed knowledge of the processes of calcination, distillation, sublimation, steaming, fixation, production of light from heat, preparation of anæsthetic and soporific substances, of metallic salts, compounds and alloys. Knowledge of tempering of steel had attained perfection during, if not before, the Mauryan Empire. "Damascus blade" was India's invention, taken by Persians and later by Arabs to the West.

### **To Medicine**

This knowledge was put to use to alleviate human misery and pain. The Atharva Veda gives symptoms of many diseases, while Rig Veda contains names of over a thousand herbs for purposes of cure. The

Ayur Veda, the Science of Medicine, is a much later development. The Hindu medicine traces causes of human illness to disorders in the four humours ; air, water, phlegm and blood, and the treatment in medical and psychological. Knowledge of chemistry was as essential as knowledge of Vaisheshika and Sankhya Schools of thought, since these gave an insight into the interrelations of mind and matter. The diagnosis and cures effected by the present physicians, practising the ancient system of medicine, are based on knowledge handed down from the Vedic times and their cures are an envy of their western compeers. Indian medicine has philosophico-scientific foundations.

The origins of this science of diagnosis and cure are attributed to Dhanvantri by his later successor, Sushruta, a Professor of Medicine in the University of Benares, in the fifth century B.C. Sushruta deals with various problems, such as obstetrics, surgery, bathing, drugs, diet, infant-feeding, hygiene, medical education, etc. He mentions surgical operations of hernia, lithotomy, cataract, caesarian section, and lists numerous surgical instruments, such as forceps, catheters, sounds, lancets, rectal and vaginal speculum. He permitted dissection of dead bodies for training in surgery. He performed grafting operations, introduced rhinoplasty which has come down to modern times, systematised the techniques of operation, sterilized the wound by fumigation. Amputation of limbs, abdominal operations, removal of fistulas and hæmorrhoids, and setting of fracture were also practised by him in the pre-Christian era.

Use of medical liquors for producing insensibility to pain was known by Sushruta. He enumerates 1,120 diseases, recommends diagnosis by inspection, palpitation and auscultation. Vaccination was also known at this time, if a text attributed to Dhanvantri is to be relied upon. Hospitals were known in Chandragupta's time ; Asoka established them extensively throughout the country.

Charaka, who lived in the sixth century A.D., systematised all this knowledge into a Samhita, an encyclopedia, and gave it to his disciples, with this injunction : " Not for self, not for the fulfilment of any earthly desire of gain, but solely for the good of suffering humanity should you treat your patients and so excel all." If Indian thought affected Greece in so many respects to which we have referred, Hippocrates' conception of the calling, still communicated to the new entrants in the medical profession, owes its origin to Charaka.

Vagbhata, 625 A.D., was probably Charaka's contemporary. He also prepared, in prose and verse, a medical compendium. Yuan Chwan mentions the beginning of a treatment with a seven-day fast. Use of bath, anaemia, diet, inhalation, injection, blood-letting were known in these times. In 927, two surgeons trepanned the skull of a king, administered samhini to make him insensitive to pain. Bhava Misra, in 1550 A.D. wrote voluminously on anatomy, physiology and medicine, anticipated Harvey by a century about blood circulation, prescribed mercury to cure syphilis, Europe's gift to India of those times.

### To Physiology, Embryology and Biology

The Hindu physicians described as early as the sixth century B.C., ligaments, sutures, lymphatics, nerve plexes, fascia, adipose and vascular tissue, muscous and synovial membranes and other muscles that a modern can discover. They knew the various processes of digestion, existence of gastric juices, conversion of chyme into chyle and of this into blood. Embryology received close attention; foetal development was described accurately. The sex of the embryo was considered subject to alteration with the aid of food and medicine. Birth control during the dry period was widely advocated. Dangers of inheritance of tuberculosis, epilepsy, leprosy, dyspepsia, etc., were known. A strong manhood, virility, was considered a *sine qua non* for marriage, so that the physical and mental efficiency of the race did not decline. Action of Yoga on the various parts of the body and functions of the mind was known. Some practice of yoga was prescribed during the student-days and daily life of the individual, as we have seen already, so that the spiritual, mental, psychic and vital improvements could be registered in the germ-plasm and be passed on to the next generation.<sup>1</sup> Use of hypnotism for therapeutic purposes was widely practised.

<sup>1</sup> "Every square inch of earth's surface is bombarded day and night with rays which come from outer surface. Their energy is enormous, but we know of them only from the effects they produce in breaking up the atoms of matter, ripping their outer electron structure and often wrecking their central cores. Since cosmic rays constantly smash atoms throughout space, they act thus within our bodies. What do they do there? They may have enormously important effects, either for good or for evil. It is barely possible, though most biologists do not accept the idea, that the cosmic

**Life, an organic whole**

This brief survey of India's achievements in the field of exact and applied sciences reveals their all-inclusive, synthetic character. Mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, astrology, medicine, physiology, anatomy, biology, ethics, psychology, philosophy and religion, all merge into each, move freely into each other's domain, enrich each other's content. Life is seen as an organic whole. This wholeness, integration, has allowed considerable scope for study of interactions, so that India's sciences, as her philosophy and religion, have retained a perennial vigour and freshness, laid under eternal obligation western philosophers and scientists, from Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle down to modern times, and notwithstanding her misfortune and humiliation of being a conquered country, given to the world a few eminent scientists.

When the modern votaries of these sciences develop a philosophical outlook, live a life of personal discipline, gain a first-hand experience of the mystery of life eternal, and look at life as a whole, as did India's ancient scientists, then the question of anti-social use of science shall not arise and the human race shall be spared the periodic of holocausts of blood and flames through which it passes in the present times.<sup>2</sup>

rays rearrange the atomic structure of the genes, which determine heredity. If so, they would be responsible for the miracle of mutation, through which all the vast differentiation of species is brought about. Even beyond this it has been suggested that the cosmic rays represent a great part of all the energy of the universe." Bruce, Bliven, *The Eight Great Mysteries of Science*, The New Republic, New York, November 17, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from *Science and Society in India*, by the author, by permission of the Hind Kitabs, Bombay, 1945.

### III. THE ARTS

#### **Indian art : synthesis of religion, philosophy and science**

India's creative genius did not exhaust itself in abstract speculation about nature, man, God and other metaphysical themes ; it did not fall a victim to the obsession of search in the realm of the physical, oblivious of the dangers of anti-social applications of scientific investigations. India used the fruits of her vision of eternal truths in the realms of the noumenal and the phenomenal, of life and form, to give them a material incarnation through the intermediacy of arts and literature. The search for, and union with, the One was the purpose of the teachings of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the various Schools of Thought and Religions ; the same purpose formed the foundation of her scientific investigations as well as artistic and literary creations. A common purpose ran through all these approaches to Truth, only the materials employed by them varied. Philosophy and religion, science and arts were all modes of one search ; they were explorations for the True, the Good and the Beautiful, while all together formed one organic whole. There was a close interrelation between all these ; they corrected each other's exuberances and disharmonious developments, so that philosophy and religion did not stray into stagnant, abstract speculations but were supported by science and found their validity in the daily life of the seeker ; science was another form of the same

quest, only in the realm of the phenomenal, but it was a handmaid of religion and was made beautiful by service of man; the arts synthesised both religion and science and dealt with matter in accordance with the inspiration afforded by the former and guidance given by the latter. Religion, Science and Art were different aspects of one Truth; together they formed one organic whole. It is through the arts that India's genius for integration, for vision of the whole, received a physical embodiment in majestic contrast with the arts of the world. Her arts are standing monuments to her unique capacity for giving religious and scientific truths incarnations in beauty. Therefore, India's arts were not intended for mere sensuous enjoyment; they were not bizarre creations of disordered, neurotic minds. They were windows through which the pure in spirit could get a glimpse into the heart of the Eternal. This spiritual and scientific character of Indian art is its significant characteristic, and it demonstrated its practical social value in fusing together the artistic traditions of the various ethnic groups that were native to the soil and others which came to the country from outside from time to time.

### **Purpose of the section**

It is not our purpose to deal with the various arts of India during the different periods of history. That is a task for the historians of the subject. We shall content ourselves with only tracing the outlines of this religio-scientific substratum that runs like a golden thread through all the forms of art and in the



various periods of their history, giving Indian art a continuity of purpose and expression.

### **The Vedic beginnings of Indian aesthetics and arts**

The beginnings of Indian æsthetics and arts lie in the early Vedic period. The search for the beautiful and the pleasing developed side by side with that of the true and the good. The spiritual vision of the Vedic seers found expression in Sanskrit, literally planned, and its magical quality was not lost sight of by the Vedic poet, as we have remarked already. He was aware of the quality of his creative work which he compared with a bride adorned to meet her lover, with a car built by a clever craftsman, or to a beautifully woven garment. The concept of the beautiful did not remain in the realm of the abstract; the beautiful was embodied in a material vesture that was both pleasing and useful. The Reality, in addition to being *sat* and *chit*, was also *ananda*, bliss, and the function of art was to represent this bliss-aspect of the Real.

### **The artist and Yoga**

Yoga was the method of this creative work, as it was also the method of religious experience and scientific research. This emphasis on identification of the artist with the One through Yoga is present in all forms of Indian art, whether they deal with nature, animal, man, superman or with the Eternal itself. The artist was therefore enjoined to master Yoga, the practical art of self-integration, so as to achieve union with the Eternal. As Sukracharya

says : " Let the imager establish images in temples by meditation on the deities who are the object of his devotion. For the successful achievement of this Yoga the lineaments of the image are described in books to be dwelt upon in detail. In no other way, not even by direct and immediate vision of the actual object, is it possible to be so absorbed in contemplation, as this in making images." Yoga was a handmaid of art.

Some Buddhist scriptures deal with this process of visualisation, of " knowing the thing in itself " in some detail ; this process was considered identical with the one used in worship. The worshipper was to form a mental image of his deity, address his prayers to Him and make offerings to Him. The artist was enjoined the same procedure. After personal purification, he was to retire to a place of peace and solitude, begin with the invocation of the Buddhas and Bodisatvas, and offer them real or imaginary flowers. He was to meditate on the four great virtues of compassion, friendliness, sympathy and detachment. Then, he was to drop his seed of thought and stay awhile in the Void in which the ceaseless flux came to a standstill, in which there was no change and in which abided peace. After this, the worshipper was to invoke the Divinity by utterance of the word, the mantram, and identify himself with Him. When the attributes of Deity were so sharply defined in imagination, He projected forth His appearance and the worshipper or the artist gained a glimpse of his ideal. This vision was now to be the model for his work. He who worshipped

Beauty embodied it in physical matter or a song, while he who sought truth spoke in terms of religious experience and metaphysics. Thus, Indian art synthesised religion, philosophy, science, psychology and ethics from the early period of its history.

### **Qualifications of an artist**

The purpose of this practice of Yoga was the subordination of the thinking principle and the purification of personality, so as to facilitate the union between the Deity and the devotee, between the ideal and the artist. The artist was a votary of the bliss-aspect, the ananda, of the Brahma; he must pay the price by self-purification and meditation. As one of the Silpa Sastras puts it: "The artist should understand the Atharva Veda, the thirty-two Silpa Sastras, and the Vedic mantras by which the Deities are invoked. He should be one who wears a sacred thread, a necklace of holy beads, and a ring of kusa grass on his finger, delighting in the worship of God, faithful to his wife, avoiding strange women, piously acquiring a knowledge of various sciences; such a one indeed is an artist." According to the same Silpa Sastra, "the painter must be a good man, no sluggard, not given to anger, holy, learned, self-controlled, devout and charitable; such should be his character." Solitude but company of fellow-artists were enjoined for gaining proficiency. This Yoga helped to establish unity between the Deity and the artist and aided the latter to achieve personal integration that was so vital for creative work of this high order. India placed her ideals of art and

artist on a high plane of spirituality, and this has given to her works of art, as to other creations, an assurance of immortality, even though anonymity to the artist himself. The ideal of beauty, the personality of the artist and his creations were parts of one whole.

### **Life-affirmation in the world of form**

In consonance with the Vedic traditions, the Indian artist did not deny the world. He worked with matter that was plastic to the push and pressure of the cosmos. The world of form was not an illusion, *maya*; it was a reflection of the Formless, the Unknowable, the Real. Thus, when dealing with the various forms of life, nature, animal and human, the Indian artist did not present a photographic picture of what he saw. He went behind the form, sought to know "the thing in itself," and gave it a pictorial representation, thus lifting the spectator to a plane where he could sense the artist's experience first-hand. The artist only opened a window for the spectator through which to peep into his world of beauty and reality.

### **Mystery of life and the common man**

But it was not only the artist who shared in this esoteric mystery of life, but also the common man, as can be seen from the general attitude of the Indian towards nature, animal and man. The soft fragrance and hush of the early dawn, the roseate hues of the sunset, the glorious magic of the night when the moon spreads her mantle of light over the earth, the

dark night when the shining orbs stand out in their delicate splendour and exchange messages across vast interstellar spaces, the sweet warble of the birds, the rhythm of the seasons, the rain-laden cloud that was a messenger of joy and hope for the parched earth, the crop in the field, hanging low with its load, its deep green rim turning to rich gold, the lakes and rivers that fed the thirsty soil of the plains with life-giving waters, the mountains, the trees, the fruits and flowers : all these and other handiwork of nature had a message for the common man. He worshipped God with these gifts. He decorated his home and hut, he offered them to his friends, he used them at the feast and the funeral. This play of life lightened his labours, refined the raw material of his nature. In his own way, the common man shared with the artist the vision of the One and experienced the joy of living which nature dispensed so generously.

### **Animal in Indian art**

It was the same vision that enabled the Indian artist to portray animal life with truthfulness and insight. To bring out the trait usually associated with any particular animal was an easy task ; it was a common-place of art. A raging lion rampant in a forest was a natural phenomenon. But the Indian artist, interested in the life of this embodied fury, presented it asleep, so as to bring out its ascent along the scale of progress, leaving the obvious to the spectator's imagination. He made the lion as the vehicle, *vahan*, of the Goddess Kali. The most favourite way of portraying the monkey was in its

playfulness, and Hanuman, the King of the monkey world, became a devotee of Sri Rama. The elephant, as in the Ajanta Caves, is delightfully humourous. The artist did not allow any funny frolic of this ponderous pachyderm to escape his observation and imagination. Nor did he ignore its dignified seriousness and intelligence. As Ganesha, the elephant-God, it became the presiding-deity of all knowledge and wrote the great epic, the Mahabharata, with one sitting. The cow was an embodiment of gentleness, beauty and utility; it is depicted as a constant companion of Sri Krishna, the God of Love and Compassion. The artist, with his awakened inner vision, was able to see life behind the form and bring his spectator face to face with that life.<sup>1</sup>

### Unity of arts and crafts

This unifying and uplifting quality of beauty was imprinted on articles of daily use. The useful must also be beautiful; there was no divorce between the arts and the crafts. The artist used the materials and imprinted on them the cunning of his craft. The pottery used for household purposes combined beauty and utility. An infinite variety of plant and animal forms were carved in wood and stone, hammered into metal. Ivory was chiselled into numerous objects of beauty and inlaid in wood. Jewellery was abundant, used as ornaments and forms of wealth.

<sup>1</sup> With the aid of this vision, the animal gods of the primitive tribes were absorbed into the Hindu pantheon. India did not reject animism but made it one of the steps in the cosmic stairs leading to monistic idealisms of the Vedanta.

Beads, bangles, clasps, pendants, anklets were made into beautiful shapes, with various designs. Manufacture of Indian fabrics combined art with science. Every thread of warp and woof was dyed with mathematical accuracy, while the dyes were prepared with the same scientific principles as were used in preparing paints for the frescoes at Ajanta. The fine muslins and golden brocades of India have a history from the times of the Egyptian and the Roman emperors to the 18th century. Thus, the carpenters, the iron, the brass, the silver and goldsmiths and weavers were both artists and artisans. They were inspired by a devotion that transcended the merely pecuniary, were aided by scientific achievements of the times and supported by a universal patronage from the public and the prince. Their handwork radiated and inspired holiness ; they made not mere objects of art, but emblems of Reality.

### **Dance**

We now come to India's attitude to dancing. Dance was considered a human representation of the creative process of the cosmos. Dance also was an integration of religion, science, psychology, and ethics. The best illustration of Indian approach to dance is seen in the image of Sri Nataraja.

### **Symbolism of Nataraja**

Sri Nataraja is represented as having four hands. His hair is braided and jewelled, a part of the locks flies in the air. In his hair is a cobra, generally with four and a half twists, a skull and a mermaid figure

of the Ganges. There is above it a crescent moon, with a wreath of Cassia leaves. He wears a man's earring in his right ear, a woman's in the left. He has ornaments on the various parts of his body, a jewelled girdle round the waist standing out prominently. He wears a sacred thread and a fluttering scarf. He holds a drum in his right hand, the other is uplifted in blessing to drive away fear from the heart of the devotee. In one left hand, he holds fire, the other points to the dwarf under his foot. He stands on a lotus pedestal which radiates an encircling radiance, fringed with flame, touching the hands that hold the drum and the fire. The whole of Indian thought has been poured into this one symbol ; it is an amazing feat in the art of synthesis.

The explanation of this dance of Sri Nataraja is given in various scriptures. According to one, " Our Lord is the dancer, who, like the latent heat in wood, diffuses His power in mind and matter, and makes them dance in turn." Dance, then, was a manifestation of his play, *Leela*, in life and form ; it represented the totality of the cosmic process, which consisted of five movements (*pancha-kriya*). These are : creation (*srishti*), preservation (*sthithi*), destruction (*samsara*), rest (*triobhava*) and release or salvation (*anugraha*).<sup>1</sup>

His four arms and hands represent His omnipresence. Drum in one hand refers to the Word, which was in the beginning, now made manifest in

<sup>1</sup> These probably correspond with the five stages in the life of the aspirant for spiritual life. The stages are those of birth, baptism, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.



the Universe ; the uplifted hand offers protection to the worshipper. Flame stands for the cosmic energy that permeates the universe, preserves it and destroys it, while the fourth hand points to the uplifted foot, the place of refuge for all who seek His protection. The crescent refers to the awakened centre of intuition, the cobra to the faculty of intuition. It is with the aid of this faculty that one can contact Reality. The Ganges stands for the life-giving waters descending from His abode in the Himalayas, the top of the world.<sup>1</sup> Earrings of man and woman stand for the unity in Him of the two forces, the positive and the negative, of life and form, of subject and object. He is the *ardha-nari-ishwara*, half-man, half-woman God. The girdle round the waist controls the forces from flowing below the diaphragm into the lower senses, sending them upwards into the creative centres of intuition and illumination. The lotus, the matrix of the universe, untouched by waters surging round it, undefiled by the earth from which it draws its sustenance, stands for His sublime purity. The encircling radiance is His glory shining through the universe. His seat is in *Chidambaram*, the heart of the universe and of the worshipper. The skull is the symbol of His destructive work, the burning of the egotism, the illusion of I-ness of those who are dear to Him. Thus, this one image enshrines the whole of the Indian thought with regard to dancing.

<sup>1</sup> Some students of occultism consider this to refer to the plane above the physical, the astral or the emotional, to which we have referred in the section dealing with the religious thought.

“The Supreme Intelligence dances in the soul . . . for the purpose of removing our sins. By these means, our Father scatters the darkness of illusion (maya), burns the thread of causality (karma), stamps down evil (avidya), showers grace and lovingly plunges the soul in the ocean of bliss (ananda). They never see rebirth who behold this mystic dance.”<sup>1</sup>

This is India's approach to dance. Dance is the cosmic rhythm and the human dance must approach the archetype. Every gesture and movement must have a meaning. Then alone can dance lead to personal integration and sublimation of energies, destroy the illusion of separateness, establish union with the Eternal and give one a living experience of bliss (the ananda) of the eternal which, as we have seen, is the essential function of Indian art.

## Music

The Indian music was based on the same principles and served the same purpose as other arts. It aimed to lift the finite into the infinite and its method was yoga, both for the artist as well as for the listener. Indian music was based on highly developed science of mathematics and Pythagorean Law of Music was India's contribution, as we have seen already. A scientific explanation of Indian music is outside the purview of this section and is a task for the specialist. We shall confine our attention to the ideals and methods of Indian music.

<sup>1</sup> Unmai Vilakkam, V. 32, 37, 39. From *Dance of Shiva*, by A. K. Coomaraswami.

**Place of emotion**

Every Indian song was in a particular raga or ragini, the latter being an abridgement or modification (literally feminine) of the former. The raga literally means colour, and its psychological significance lay in the mood it suggested, the emotion it evoked. There are six ragas, each with five raginis, making a total of thirty-six. Each raga is associated with an hour of the day or night or with some season. Some ragas have names such as "With a voice like the thunder-cloud," "Like the God Indra," "Delighting the Heart," "Intoxication," "Spring," "Evening Beauty," "Swing," "Honey Flower," "Dawn," etc.,. Thus, Indian music saw the unity between nature and man, it synchronised the moods of both into one whole. Indian music made use of the knowledge of the constituent principles of nature, of man and their mutual interaction. Therefore, healing was known to be one of the elementary functions of music.

**The magic of music : union of man with the eternal**

To these two aspects of Indian music, its synthesis of scientific knowledge of nature and of the psychology of man, should be added the third one, the religious. The real magic of the music lay in the union of man with the Real. The subject matter of song, therefore, was love, the passionate yearning of the human heart to see the beloved face to face, to taste the bliss, the ananda, to its last drop. The words of the song were earnest, sincere, poetical, and they were the

vehicle for expression of a mood rather than a narration or description of that mood. In *alap*, or art-song, the words became incoherent syllables or just dropped off, the singing gaining ascendancy over the words of the song. The voice itself was an instrument of music, and "music existed in its own right and not merely to illustrate the words." Dr. Coomaraswamy has brought out the religious character of Indian music in the following words: "This Indian music is essentially impersonal: it reflects an emotion and an experience which are deeper and wider and older than the emotion or wisdom of any single individual. Its sorrow is without tears, its joy without exultation and it is passionate without any loss of serenity. It is in the deepest sense of words all-human. But when the Indian prophet speaks of inspiration, it is to say that the Vedas are eternal, and all that the poet achieves by his devotion is to hear or see; it is then *Sarasvati*, the goddess of speech and learning, or *Narada*, whose mission it is to disseminate occult knowledge in the sound of the strings of his vina, or *Krishna*, whose flute is forever calling us to leave the duties of the world, and follow Him—it is these rather than any human individual, who speak through the singer's voice, and are seen in the movements of the dancer.

"Or we may say that this is an imitation of the music in heaven. The master musicians of India are always represented as the pupils of a god, or as visiting the heaven-world to learn there the music of the spheres—that is to say, their knowledge springs

from a source far within the surface of the empirical activity of the waking consciousness. In this connection, it is explained why it is that human art must be studied, and may not be identified with the imitation of our everyday behaviour. When Siva expounds the technique of the drama to Bharata, the famous author of the *Natya Sastra*, he declares that human art must be subject to law, because in man the inner and the outer life are still in conflict. Man has not yet found himself, but all his activity proceeds from a laborious working of the mind, and all his virtue is self-conscious. What we call our life is unco-ordinated, and far from harmony of art, which rises above good and evil. It is otherwise with the gods, whose every gesture immediately reflects the affections of the inner life. Art is an imitation of that perfect spontaneity, the identity of intuition and expression of those who are of the kingdom of heaven, which is within us. Thus, it is that art is nearer to life than any fact can be; Mr. Yeats has reason when he says that Indian music, though its theory is elaborate and its technique so difficult, is not an art, but life itself.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Unity between the musician and the listener**

Thus, like the fellow-artists seeking the union with the One through its ananda aspect, the Indian musician set himself the same task : to make articulate the music of heaven which otherwise remained mute, and with its aid to attain union with the One. The

<sup>1</sup> Coomaraswami, A. K., *The Dance of Shiva*, pp. 79-80.

musician's orchestration of sounds, "an undulating stream of rhythms and recurrence," produced a Yoga in which the I-ness of both the artist and the listener came to rest, time and space were left behind and the soul ascended into union with the heart of the Eternal. Indian music sought to take man beyond the words to the Word, beyond sounds to the Voice of Silence where alone the *ananda* abides.

### Indian painting

These ideals and methods, which formed the foundation of India's religions, philosophies, sciences, dancing, music and minor arts, were painted on the canvass, sculptured in metal and marble, and built into stone. There runs through these various arts of painting, sculpture and architecture the same fundamental *motif*: to see life whole, to integrate the many into the one, to build the visible after the archetype of the Invisible and the Universal. To trace the variations in the manifestations of this fundamental theme in the various arts and through the different periods of Indian history is a task for the specialist of these subjects. All that interests us here is to notice the continuity and the fulfilment of these ideals in these arts of India.

### "Six limbs of painting"

In addition to the spiritual idealism and ethical preparation of the artist and his training in Yoga, which we have already discussed, the Hindu treatises on painting laid down earlier than the Christian era the six canons of professional excellence, *Sadanga*,

“Six Limbs of Painting,” which the artist was to master to gain proficiency in his art. These were : knowledge of appearances, correct perception, measure and structure, the action of feelings on forms, the infusion of grace or artistic representation, similitude, and, finally, an artistic use of brush and colours.

#### **Four periods of Indian painting**

The history of Indian painting is divided into four periods, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Moghul and the modern. Of the Hindu period, there is little evidence, though some palettes with colours ready for use, in neolithic caves in India, have been found and there are references to Kind Pasannanda's palace containing picture galleries, in the *Vinayaka Pitaka*, about 300 B.C. But painting was a widely practised art. In the Buddhist period, when there was a renaissance, spiritual and social, the arts kept pace with the changes. Painting reached its zenith, as can be seen in the frescoes of Ajanta. Here, while science was pressed into service of the art, religion inspired the fervour, supplied the theme, while devotion gave the loving persistence lasting over centuries. Notwithstanding depredations of the tropical climate and negligence of man, the frescoes in Ajanta caves stand out in undimmed lustre and bear testimony to the creative genius of India. In Cave I is painted the story of man's ascent. Beginning with flowers and fowl in the ceiling, delicately drawn, we proceed to the next stage in evolution, the animal, and we see a fresco of four deer on a wall. Nearby is a couple, perhaps Shiva and Parvati, adorned with jewellery.

Finally, there is the Boddhisatva, the highest stage a mortal may reach, with a look of compassion and understanding which no work of art has yet excelled in portraying. The artist saw life as a whole, flower, fowl, animal, man and superman, and gave his vision an embodiment in plaster and paint. The Sigriya frescoes of Ceylon and the wall-paintings of Bagh belong to this period of Indian art. There was a synthesis of religion, science and art.

In the Moghul period, flourished two styles, the *kalms*, of painting, Jeypore and Kangra. The religious and political expediencies imposed restrictions on painting of religious themes, and the artists turned to painting of human forms and scenes of daily life. The miniatures of the Moghul period contained portraits of the living people ; they exercised influence on artists of Europe of those days. Notwithstanding the shift in emphasis from the religious to the so-called secular themes, the vision to penetrate from the seen to the unseen remained undimmed, so that the painting was not a mere photographic representation of the individual, but of his inner being as the artist sensed it. This heritage of the esotericism of the craft, handed down from the Vedic times, remained a living reality. The purpose of painting was to catch a glimpse of the Eternal and give this fleeting moment a permanent shape in plaster and paint.

### Sculpture

The history of Indian sculpture begins with the age of the Mohan Jo Daro, but between this period



and the time of Asoka, there is a gap in the history of art, though not in the art itself. From Asoka's times to the appearance of the Gandhara School sculpture was a part of architecture, and not an independent art in its right. But it centred round Buddhist religion. The Gandhara School, from 150 B.C. to 320 A.D. witnessed a synthesis of Indian ideals with the Greco-Roman influences, though we should be cautious in ascribing much importance to the latter. The Universities of Taxilla, Benares, Sridhanya Kantaka and Nalanda lived in the fullness of their vigour and their influence in the promulgation of Indian arts was supreme. Be the exact nature of Greco-Roman influence what it may, India absorbed it and after the passing away of the Kushan kings, resumed her traditions of Asoka's times, all the richer for the Greek interlude. During the Gupta period, 320 to 600 A.D. Indian sculpture blossomed out to its rich potentialities. Buddhist aversion to image-making relaxed and some of the best examples of sculpture belong to this period. The statues of Buddha of Mathura School, the seated Buddha at Sarnath, Buddha figures at Karli, Bodhisatva torso at Sanchi, Buddha figures in relief at Ajanta and the colossal image at Sultanganj were some of the masterpieces produced in this period. Throughout India, religion inspired sculpture and architecture, and all the three crossed the Indian frontiers and produced equally great masterpieces in the countries surrounding India.

There are no architectural remains of pre-Asoka period ; only brick structures are extant to bear

testimony to the knowledge of the principles of architecture and town-planning. Megasthenes mentions palaces of Chandragupta as superior in design as Persipolis in Persia ; which was the source of inspiration it is hard to say. But with the embracing of Buddhism by Asoka, Indian methods and motives gained ascendancy, so that in the great capital at Sarnath, below the four lions, Persian in countenance, standing back to back, is a frieze of exquisitely carved figures, with peculiarly Indian symbols, the Wheel of Law, and an elephant. Under the frieze is another Indian symbol, a great stone lotus, with petals turned upwards, representing the womb of creation, serving as a throne for the Wheel of Law.

### **Architecture**

Thus, religion continued to inspire art forms during this period, and the stupas of Bharut and Sanchi, the 17,000 square feet of ornate rails at Amravati, innumerable rock-cut temples and caves which fused architecture, sculpture and painting into one harmony, the numerous viharas or monasteries and temples are some of the architectural remains raised by the loving hands of devotees. The Jains showed an equal devotion to architecture and their temples at Aihole, Mount Abu, and Khajuraho are some of the achievements to their credit. Other creations of the Hindu art in the north are the group at Bhuwaneshwara, the Lingraj and the Rajarani temples, the tower of Jaganath at Puri, the Surya Temples at Kararaka and Mudhera, Temples of Sasbahu and Telika Mandir and the Palace of Raja

Mansing at Gwalior, the Tower of Victory at Chitoor, and the Shivaite and the Vaishnavite Temples at Khajuraho, standing close to those of the Jains to bear testimony to India's spirit of tolerance, the Shivaite Caves at Elephanta where the barbarous piety of the Portuguese ran riot in disfiguring statuary and reliefs. The Itagi Shrine at Hyderabad, the Somnath Temple at Mysore, the Hayshaletwara Temple at Halebad and the Hindu shrine of Kailash, called after Shiva's dwelling place in the Himalayas, were the monuments raised by devout Hindus to their deities. The last is a temple 250 feet long, 160 feet wide and 100 feet high, cut out of a rock, with beautiful carvings on the walls, powerful pillars, statues and has reliefs, all chiselled out, with one fresco, "The Lovers," left as a specimen of the art of painting.

### **Synthesis of Aryo-Dravidian traditions**

These are some of the extant monuments of Indian architecture, but the full splendour of Indian architecture can be realized in the south, where it was superior both in quantity and quality and more impressive than that of north India. Here also religion was the foundation of art, and evidences of deliberate attempts to synthesise the Aryan and the Dravidian traditions of art abound in the number of symbols, emblems and animals used in architecture. The south gave shelter to Indian culture, while the north held the alien invaders at bay. With the prolific abundance of religious and philosophical thought in the south, there went also an intense

desire to create works of art, and the artists and the guilds built with tireless zeal, scattering throughout the South marvellous shrines of gigantic proportions. The Shiva Shrine with a thousand columns, a sacred tank and ten gopurams at Madura, Srirangam at Trichinopoly, the Shiva Temple at Tanjore, the Viriprakash Temple at Pattadakal and the Rameswaram Temple which took five centuries to complete, are some of the significant works of art of the South. All this creation was not the work of toil and tears wrung from unwilling artists ; it was dedication to the best that the artists knew, an offering to the Deity, with whom they sought oneness.

### **Synthesis of Indo-Muslim traditions**

This spirit of synthesis in Indian architecture attained its triumph during the period of Muslim predominance in the country. The followers of Islam had carried India's religion, science and art to the West and raised magnificent structures at Alhambara, Hassan's massive mosque at Cairo and Osman's mosque at Jerusalem. Therefore, when they turned their attention to India, they found it easy to use Indian artists, to appropriate Indian motifs and methods, and even stones from the Hindu temples with which to build their mosques ! This tendency towards synthesis of Hindu and Moslem styles was further reinforced by Akbar's spirit of religious tolerance and his attempt to merge the various faiths into a Universal Religion. The various works of architecture, erected during the reigns of his successors, kept close to the traditions initiated by

their grand sire, culminating in the incarnation of beauty itself in the superb edifice of the Taj. This new manifestation of India's genius for synthesis, the significance of which is lost on us in these days of harsh stridencies of political strife, has inspired even an outsider, an American author, who has put it in a language of lyrical beauty. "When we think of Indian architecture in summary and retrospect we find it in two themes, masculine and feminine, Hindu and Mahomedan, about which the structural symphony revolves. As, in the most famous of symphonies, the starting hammer-strokes of the opening bars are shortly followed by a strain of infinite delicacy, so in Indian architecture the overpowering monuments of the Hindu genius at Bodh-Gaya, Bhuvaneshwara, Madura and Tanjore are followed by the grace and melody of the Moghul style at Fatehpur-Sikri, Delhi and Agra; and the two themes mingle in a confused (?) elaboration to the end. It was said of the Moghuls that they built like giants and finished like jewellers; but this epigram might better have been applied to Indian architecture in general; the Hindus built like giants and Moghuls ended like jewellers. Hindu architecture impresses us in mass, Moorish architecture in its detail; the first had the sublimity of strength, the other had the perfection of beauty; the Hindus had passion and fertility, the Moors had taste and self-restraint. The Hindu covered his buildings with such exuberant statuary that one hesitates whether to class them as a building or sculpture; the Mohammedan abominated images, and confined him-

self to floral or geometrical decoration. The Hindus were the Gothic sculptor-architects of India's Middle ages ; the Moslems were the expatriated artists of the exotic Renaissance. All in all, the Hindu style reached greater heights, in proportion as sublimity excels loveliness ; on second thought we perceive that Delhi Fort and the Taj Mahal, beside Angokar and Borobuddur, are beautiful lyrics beside profound dramas—Petrarch beside Dante, Keats beside Shakespeare, Sappho beside Sophocles. One art is graceful and partial expression of fortunate individuals, the other is the complete and powerful expression of a race.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Durant, Will, *Our Oriental Heritage*, pp. 680-681.

## IV. LITERATURE

### **Sanskrit, a "planned" language**

There is no other nation in the world, ancient or modern, that can present a literature so vast and variegated, so profound in thought, so deep in feeling, so beautiful in expression, as India. But before we list the various forms of Indian literature, let us pause for a moment and notice a few salient features of it. The language used from the earliest times was based on advanced principles of grammar. India began tracing roots, relations and construction of words at an early date and brought into being a language that was "planned" with the purpose of producing a magical effect (Sanskrit). Sanskrit became the vehicle of India's thought and it lent itself admirably to giving expression to subtle nuances of thought and feeling. Panini is the first grammarian the world has known, and still the best. He developed the Sanskrit grammar which wins unqualified admiration of the students of this subject all over the world.

### **Poetical garb for all modes of thought**

While the instrument of expression was scientific, the form was poetical. When thought reaches a high pinnacle, it becomes synthesised into an epigram and assumes the garb of poetry. Therefore, in India, every subject, philosophy, science, physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, sociology, politics, economics,

psychology, epics, fables, biography and history found expression in poetry. India seems to have decided since Vedic times that if there was anything worth saying, it should be said in a poetical form.

### **Place of will and emotion in Indian literature**

As in the case of individuals, so in nations, the poetical genius must necessarily elevate emotion and feeling above intellect. The poet, who gives articulation to yearnings of the soul and becomes a mouth-piece of the unexpressed agony of creation in its upward ascent, must use a language that is suffused with emotion and tenderness. In the literature of India, therefore, emotion plays a greater part than will. But emotion was given a subdued expression. Tenderness may make for 'sweetness of life' but demands of truth must not be ignored. Therefore, there was self-effacement without noise, gentleness without ostentation. Rama is deeply devoted to his parents, but he prefers separation and exile in order to respect his father's word given to his step-mother many years ago. Prahlad faces his father's challenge unflinchingly and is firm in his faith in God. Savitri faces the God of Death to save her husband. Sita goes through the ordeal of fire to prove her innocence to her husband and his subjects. All these are acts of will but they are inspired by a feeling of love and devotion. When the lower emotions, gross passions of the human heart, such as anger, hatred, jealousy and greed were portrayed in Indian literature, the purpose was to indicate the folly of entertaining them, and the retribution they brought. There was, thus, a



unique refinement of feeling and thought in Indian literature that constituted its chief characteristic.

### **Place of nature in Indian literature**

We have already referred to India's attitude towards nature in various places. It was one of comradeship. Flowers, birds, beasts and men shared the one life, facing the same suffering and pain of the upward travail, entertained the same sentiments and affections. The early Vedic Indians became lyrical in their adoration of nature and its manifestations. This is a description of the Dawn in the Rig Veda :

We gaze upon her as she comes  
The Shining daughter of the sky  
The mighty darkness she uncovers,  
And light she makes, the pleasant one that we see.

The lotus keeps its vigil during the night and opens its heart to the life-giving touch of the sun in the early morn. The bee and the flower play a game of hide and seek. All nature, flowers, trees, birds and deer grieve over Shakuntala's departure from her father's hermitage and her leave-taking is one of the most touching scenes in the drama of Kalidasa. The swan paints a poetic picture of Nala on whom Damayanti had set her heart. The bird Jatayu gives a fight to Ravana to rescue Sita as she is being kidnapped to Lanka. Hanuman, the monkey-god, helps Sri Rama with his hordes to fight Ravana to win back Sita. Rishi Dattatriya has twenty-four teachers, most of whom were animals, because each taught a lesson. Indian literature is full of this

spirit of comradeship between man and the lower kingdoms of nature ; it is suffused with a feeling of tenderness towards all sub-human manifestations of life.

### **Literature and Religion**

Life was an organic whole, there were no watertight compartments in it. Literature, which reflected life of the nation in its amazing richness, also was an organic whole. Therefore, religion which entered the life of the people so largely, mixed freely with literature ; religion was woven into the texture of every phase of life, and literature came to be mouthpiece of a life whose sole object was upward ascent and spiritual illumination. Literature, like other forms of India's creative genius, was meant to convey a meaning and purpose ; it was an instrument for inculcating principles of ethical conduct. Indian epics, dramas, lyrics, fables, etc., never missed an opportunity of elucidating some higher principle of life and points of ethical conduct, like the Vedas, the Upanishads and other philosophical and religious works. Literature was religion and philosophy put in the simpler and pleasing form of verse. Prose is comparatively a recent device when life lost its poetic touch and became prosaic as a result of ceaseless internal conflict. The purpose of Indian literature was to elevate and illumine, not merely to entertain.

### **Literature and problems of life**

Indian literature, therefore, dealt with the eternal verities ; it did not reflect the shifting moods of a

mind or a society in transition, in constant flux. When the fundamental purpose of life was known, and man had a vision of the transcendental values to aspire after, he had found the pole-star by which to steer the course of his conduct and not waste his time and energies in finding solutions to the puzzles and problems of life, with a trial and error method. The literature became the vehicle for illustrating the solutions of these problems of life, of working out the verities in the daily lives of individuals.

These, then, were some of the characteristics of Indian literature : a scientific language as an instrument of literary expression, predominance of emotion over will, a feeling of fellowship with all forms of life, a universality of appeal to Reality that was beyond all relativities of space and time. Literature moulded the life of the nation, gave expression to its emotional response and indicated the right course of conduct on all occasions. A solution to every problem and plot was conceived in terms of the eternal and not the temporal.

### **Psychology of authorship**

Such being the high task of literature, the responsibility of being an author was great. He alone could formulate a system of thought, write a biography or a drama who had a first hand experience of the Real, who was a rishi. The Indian seer therefore left a record of his vision, but not his name. Anonymity has been a characteristic of India's great seers, sages, scientists, poets and artists. The acquisition of that vision was possible only through Yoga, and

this was India's approach to the psychology of authorship. Valmiki was familiar with the story of Rama and yet before composing his Ramayana, he went through a practice of Yoga to see the story as a whole. "Seating himself with his face towards the East, and sipping water according to religious injunctions, he set himself to yoga-contemplation of his theme. By virtue of his yoga-power he clearly saw before him Rama, Lakshman, Sita and Dasaratha, together with his wives, in his kingdom laughing, talking, acting and moving as if in real life . . . by yoga power that righteous one beheld all that had come to pass, and all that was to come to pass in the future, like a nelli fruit on the palm of his hand. And having truly seen all by virtue of his concentration, the generous sage began the setting forth of the history of Rama."<sup>1</sup> All creative work, if it was to be true to the genius of the nation, involved practice of yoga.

### **Various types of literature**

For the various phases of life, India produced corresponding types of literature. The Vedas contained the quintessence of all wisdom ; they formed the fountain head of all subsequent knowledge and literature. With passage of time, the Vedic thought became elaborated and analysed and the four Upa Vedas and Six Vedangas appeared. The Upanishads, the Six Schools of Thought and the Buddhist and Jain literature further expounded, enriched and

<sup>1</sup> *Ramayana, Balakandam.*

sharply defined the philosophic, religious and scientific contents of the Vedas,<sup>1</sup> while sociology, politics, economics, psychology of sex,<sup>2</sup> epics, dramas, lyrical poetry, fable and romance appeared as independent subjects.

### **Didactic character of Indian literature**

The Epics, Mahabharata and Ramayana, represent India's effort to offer the highly advanced religious and scientific thought in an easily assimilable form of narrative to the common man. The authorship, the size of the Epics and the subjects of the stories need not detain us here. But it is important to notice that both the Epics are directly addressed to the man engaged in the arena of daily life, touch life at numerous points and are interspersed with ethical teachings for the common man. Indeed, the story of Mahabharata is interrupted at the most crucial moment when the armies of opponents are ranged on the battlefield and it is time for action, and Sri Krishna gives the loftiest philosophical discourse, thus illustrating the Indian ideal that action of the most furious kind may be guided from within, that spiritual life and destruction of the wrong are not incompatible with each other. Here, on the battle-

<sup>1</sup> These have been already dealt with, see Section 1.

<sup>2</sup> Dharma Shastra, Artha Shastra, Kama Shastra. These will be dealt with at their appropriate places in the subsequent sections of this chapter. When reviewing the third volume of the projected series of seven of Dr. Dasgupta's *History of Sanskrit Philosophy*, Professor Muirhead wrote in the Hibbert Journal that Dr. Dasgupta had surveyed as much literature in the first three volumes as was produced by Europe, beginning with the Greeks and ending with the Mediæval ages. It is further maintained that only about one-third of the existing Sanskrit literature has found its way into translations in English language.

field, Sri Krishna expounds duties of the various groups constituting a social order, the causes of social disorganisation and national decay, the mysteries of Sankhya and Yoga, giving a glimpse of His Cosmic Self to his disciple, Arjuna, teaching the spiritual significance of detachment and action leading to salvation. The two Epics present sublime teachings on integration, individual and social, and bear witness to the Himalayan heights of idealism attained by the ancient India. Their splendid language, their fidelity to the essence of things, accuracy of portraiture and logical construction have always appealed to the Indian reader, and the idealistic pictures of heroes and heroines have formed the contrapunt on which millions of aspiring souls have moulded their conduct. For centuries, the two Epics, part or whole, have been dramatised by travelling troupes for elevation of the country and the city-dwellers, and through the mechanism of this *rasa-lila*, India transmitted this rich spiritual and cultural heritage to generation after generation and thus preserved the purity, the sublimity and the continuity of her cultural ethos.

### Drama

Drama in India is said to have begun with the Vedas ; probably it developed side by side with other forms of literature and art. Ashwagosha, a teacher at Kanishka's court, Bhasha, Kalidasa, Bharavi, Bhatti, Kumaradasa, Magh and Bhavabhuti are some of the well-known dramatists. What interests us here are some of the significant features of Indian dramatic art. Tragedy had no place in Indian drama.

If life is a continuum, an interlude on the physical plane is but a part of the picture in the becoming. The ending of a play was always happy. Faithful love was rewarded, no matter what suffering it went through. Truth always triumphed. Coincidences were frequent, since they were planned by either one's own intuition or higher self, karma or by intervention of higher powers. Nature and animal found adequate mention ; they served as man's friends. A jester relieved the monotony, stood for the humours and ironies of fate, but often spoke words of wisdom. Physical touch between different sexes was not allowed ; all burlesque or vulgarity was eschewed. The woman acted her part with poise and dignity, playing the part of man's saviour. The length of the play provided opportunities for elucidation of religious truths and philosophical ideas. The play began with invocation of the favourite God and ended with His blessings. The drama we intended to telescope life's problems in a short compass and illumine them with the wisdom of the Real. Translation of Indian dramas and other literature in European languages in the eighteenth century affected the Romantic movement in European literature, as is admitted by Herder.

### **Rasa**

Drama, like other types of art, had a science of its own, and it will be pertinent to review in passing the æsthetics as developed in the Sanskrit literature on poetics and drama. The essential element in a work of art, be it drama, poetry, music, etc., was, in

addition to style and suggestion, *rasa*, emotion or flavour, and a work of art was *rasavant*, having *rasa*. The lover of art, one who enjoyed *rasa*, was a *rasika*, while the act of enjoyment or contemplation was *rasavadana*. *Rasa*, emotional experience, arose out of interaction of four factors : mood, determinant, involuntary emotion and consequents<sup>1</sup>. Moods were of two kinds, permanent and impermanent. The former were nine : heroic, odious, furious, terrible, erotic, pathetic, wondrous and peaceful. The transient moods were thirty-three, such as joy, agitation, impatience, etc. The determinants constituted the physical factors of *rasa*. These were the theme, the plot, the place and time, the hero and the accompanying characters. The consequents were expressions of feelings, such as gestures, etc. The involuntary emotions were eight, such as trembling, etc. One of the moods must form the master-motif to co-ordinate the expression of the various subordinate emotions. A work of art must possess this unifying factor :

As a king to his subjects, as a guru to his disciples  
Even so the master-motif is lord of all other motifs.<sup>2</sup>

A genuine work of art must represent one of the permanent moods. If a transient emotion takes the place of the permanent, it leads to sacrifice of *rasa* ; a passing and personal emotion is neither true nor beautiful. It confuses spirit with form, eternity with time, prettiness with beauty, passion with love. India therefore emphasised the spiritual character

<sup>1</sup> Bhava, vibhava, anubhava and sattwabhava.

<sup>2</sup> Bharata, *Natya Sastra*, 7, 8.



and purpose of drama and other works of art and literature and her approach to the subject was based on a profound knowledge of the psychology of emotions.

### **Other forms of literature**

To Indian drama should be added lyrical poetry, fables and romances. The Vedas show a lyrical quality of a high order. The first lyrical work that appeared was Bharathari's three Shatakas, or Centuries of Verse, of Law, Polity and Detachment, about the seventh century A.D. It is a work of unsurpassed beauty in the field of lyrical literature, containing a wealth of imagination and description. Jayadev was the next in the field, about the twelfth century. His *Gita Govind*, the Song of the Divine Cowherd, centres around Sri Krishna and Radha and its ecstatic, \*lyrical quality has delighted the hearts of millions of men and women in India and other parts of the world.

India produced, in the field of fables, two works of outstanding merit, the Panchatantra and Hitopadesha. These are stories of animals for entertainment of children. The Panchatantra contains, under five headings, stories of animal behaviour from which a moral is drawn for use in daily life. These fables reveal a deep insight into human nature and the problems of social adjustment and may be considered as the earliest instruction in "the strategy in handling people." Hitopadesha is a later and shorter work, but is intended to serve the same purpose. Both books convey some significant lessons, but with a charming simplicity and appeal and were recom-

mended to the prince and the peasant for study and application.

These are some of the types of literature that India produced, and their distinctive features have been reproduced subsequently in the literature written in various provincial languages as they took shape in course of time. Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Maharatta, Kanarese, Tamil, Telugu, Oriya and other languages have taken shape during the last few hundred years or so, and they have produced literature that has been true to the national tradition of India of immortalising human yearning for union with the Real, of catching those fleeting moments of eternity that give a meaning to life, of dramatising events that bear affinity to eternal verities and of dispensing purified emotional ecstasy to the common man, and through dramatisation of some of its parts, giving a continuity to the national ethos of India throughout these centuries.

## V. SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

### **Basis of human social organization**

There now remains the last part of our survey of Indian culture, and that is a brief discussion of the principles underlying her social organization. The Vedic seers realized that the test of man's claim to being civilized lay in the type of social structure that he could devise to serve as a medium for transmission of the cultural heritage of the group as well as for ensuring individual and group integration. They, therefore, laid down the principles which were to govern India's social organization, ensure its continuity and fidelity to the universal order. The social structure was to approximate the ideal of the "City of God," Devanagiri, in which co-operation and mutual aid characterise relationships between individuals and groups, in which social institutions are knit together by an ideal of mutual interdependence, cohesiveness and harmonious development, and in which there is no "logic of fish," or, to use its modern version, "struggle for existence and survival of the fittest." It was realized by the Indian sociologists that both the individual and the group could find self-expression and fulfilment only in and through a complex of social institutions, based on *dharma*, co-operation, mutual aid, integration, synthesis, the vision of the whole.

The problem resolved itself into two parts : the

individual and the group. The former was a member of the group and the group was to aid him in his self-fulfilment as well as protect itself from external aggression. Thus, both the individual and the group were seen to form one organic whole; they were the obverse and the reverse of the same coin and their demands were not mutually antagonistic or destructive, but complementary. There was to be no edification of the individual with his so-called, aggressive rights, nor of the group, so that it subordinated the individual completely, denied him his duties to his higher self. The claims of both were to be reconciled. Thus, both the individual and the group were dealt with in a manner as to reduce to the minimum their centrifugal tendencies, their inner strains and stresses. This emphasis on integration helped to eschew conflict from social relationships. It also explains the absence of implements of war from the finds of the Sumerian culture. A statue, representing Shiva in meditation, confirms the view that the early Indians saw in meditation the best instrument for resolution of personal, individual conflicts, as well as a "moral equivalent for war," to use William James's expression. Balance, orderly progress of individual and group, harmonious relationship between both, was the ideal aimed at by the Indian sociologists. An attempt will be made to survey briefly their approach to the problems of social organization.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author has drawn for the remainder of this section, on his *Manu : A Study in Hindu Social Thought*, Madras, 1934.

### Sociology of groups

The whole philosophy of Indian social organization may be summarized in one word, *varna-ashrama-dharma*, which may be appropriately translated as Social Federalism. This principle of social integration or synthesis was understood as early as the times of the Samhitas in the Vedic age, as we have seen already.<sup>1</sup> The Vedic seers realized that the best and the surest way of saving society from frequent suicidal chaos was to divide its members into specific groups, with well-defined functions and privileges or rewards for each. The first group was that of the *Brahmans*, the teachers and the priests. They were the custodians of the social and spiritual heritage of the group and were to pass it on to the succeeding generations. They were to preserve the purity of idealism, point the way to the Eternal discovered by them through study and meditation, while their fellowmen were busy with life's daily tasks which left little leisure. The Brahman was a man of *intellect*; he came from the mouth of Brahma.

The second group was that of the *Kshatriyas*. They were men of *action*. They were the guardians of the race. They were soldiers, sailors, civil servants and legislators. They kept peace and order within the group and protected it from alien aggression. Theirs was a life of service and sacrifice; they came from the arms of Brahma.

The third group was that of the *Vaishyas*, the

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, pp. 54.

merchants. They attended to the distribution of the necessities of life. The vaishya was the merchant who made wealth ; he was a man of *desire*. He was born from the thighs of Brahma.

The fourth and the last group was that of the *Sudras*. The sudra was engaged in producing life's necessities, food, clothing and shelter, so that the physical organism of the group was kept in good health. On this group of working men depended the physical welfare of the whole community, its industries, its prosperity. This working class was psychologically, a group of undefined aptitudes, unevolved, men of mechanical temperament, the common men. They came from the feet of Brahma. Look where we will, whether it be a primitive community or a modern nation, its population falls easily into these four categories. According to Manu, there are no other groups.

### **Integration of various factors**

This division of men into four types, the teacher, the warrior, the merchant and the labourer, is based on sound psychology, ethics, biology and economics. Some men are intellectual by temperament, some are active, some acquisitive and others undefined, none of these. To each was assigned the task true to its type, in conformity with its inherent temperament, *svadharma*. All together formed an organic whole. These four groups came from the mouth, the hands, the thighs and the feet of Brahma. Under an arrangement such as this, there is conservation of social energies ; there is no necessity of trial and

error method. All are not equally endowed with equal physical and mental capacities, but every one should be given an opportunity for putting to use the faculties with which he has been endowed. Man should be treated as a man, and not as an economic hand. Danger of exploitation of one group by another can thus be eliminated. Social harmony and conscious co-operation were made the chief characteristics of human association. The ideal was to evolve a functional and not an acquisitive society. It is this *varna dharma* that has been the bulwark of Indian civilization and saved it from wreckage of time. Each group had its duties and its own rewards or compensations. The labourer had to work, but he was to be looked after as a younger member of the family.<sup>1</sup> The man of desire, the vaishya, was to acquire wealth ; power and authority were vested in the kshatriya, while all these were to honour the teacher, to obey his religious and spiritual injunctions and accept his guidance. The teacher was to be supported by the gifts of the other three groups. Thus, none encroached on each other's preserve. Under this arrangement, labour cannot threaten disruption of social life with strikes, business cannot control politics, state cannot become all powerful, reducing the individual to an abstraction, and the teacher cannot become a propagandist or a partisan, since the Rod of Dharma, the rule of righteousness, governs all social relations. The fundamental principle of social organization was

<sup>1</sup> Thus, the rigour of social distinction and economic slavery, characteristic of the Greek and the modern civilizations, were done away with.

integration and not on a brotherhood of flat, dead level of uniformity and so-called equality. Society should function as a healthy organism, the mouth, the arms, the legs and the feet must attend to their respective functions. The various groups were not equal in endowments and cannot be equal in service. This social federalism was one of the steps towards stable social progress.

### **A mechanism for racial synthesis**

It was with the aid of this mechanism that India sought to solve her racial problem. The Aryan conquerors assimilated the non-Aryans into their fold on the basis of this slow and steady growth of the inner man, on evolution of the life and its manifestation in ethical conduct through karma and reincarnation, rather than on the 'racial uniform.' The Aryans did not resort to the short-cut of annihilating the primitive people with whom they came into contact as the European races have done whenever they have occupied lands in America, Asia, Africa and Australia, but they gave them a place in their body-politic, assigning to them the tasks befitting their intelligence and subordinate status. It is true that the process was slow, and small numbers of non-Aryans were absorbed in the higher group, but the Indian sociologists realized that biological amalgamation did not necessarily make for cultural progress. The process of race-mixture was kept within bounds, so as to avoid the lowering of ideals and values. The causes of conflict between the two races were reduced to the minimum, and this has saved India's



history from being disfigured by racial conflicts. India made a valiant attempt at racial synthesis, and considering the enormity of the problem, made a great headway with it.

### **Integration of human personality**

The life of the individual was also based on the same principles as that of the group. The individual had duties not only to the group to which he belonged by temperament, svadharma, but also to himself. His life was divided into four parts, each part to be spent in association with the group which helped him to fulfil his duties to himself and to his fellowmen. The *first* part of life was to be devoted to education, brahmacharya. As a student, he should build up his faculties, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual by proper study, self-control, simple living and service of the teacher. It was to be education for the whole man. His *second* part of life was that of a householder, when he was to take a wife, build a home and rear a family, for the man became a "full" man only when he had a wife and a child. The three together formed the primary group, the basic institution of civilization. The family ensured the continuation of the race, discharge of obligations to the ancestors and transmission of the social heritage to the future generations. The biological impulses find adequate outlet here and are restrained in their vagrant tendencies. The *third* stage that of a vanaprastha, one of preparation for returning "homewards." It was one of partial retirement from the demands of daily life; one must live in the world and

yet not be of it. The *fourth* and the last was the stage of complete relinquishment of worldly ties, sanyasa, with all the energies devoted to meditation, to preparation for a willing acceptance of the call from the Beyond. This *ashrama dharma* was the education of the whole man, the means of his integration or self-fulfilment.

### **Synthesis of individual, social and racial interests**

By these means the Indian sociologists neither subordinated the individual to the group nor allowed him license to pursue his selfish interests unrestrained by demands of the group. They evolved this mechanism for reconciling the claims of the individual and the group and of the various groups among themselves. Thus India escaped the internal discord and conserved her energies, so that her civilization has not been threatened with disintegration under assaults of alien cultures. This social federalism of varna-ashrama-dharma helped to resolve all elements of conflict, to serve the interests of both, to harmonise racial elements, to secure an equitable division of labour and a just distribution of deserts, to eliminate cut-throat competition, to concentrate public opinion and interest on the fundamental problem of life,—the securing of general human welfare, loka sangraha,—and to combine unity with diversity. It ensured liberty within limits, equality of opportunity for all and fraternity of spirit. This division of an individual's life into stages with appropriate tasks and rewards and of the group into four sub-groups, with their respective duties and deserts, was the happiest effort

of the Indian sociologists. It was due to this principle of division and mutual inter-dependence that India achieved a high degree of civilization, preserved and perfected the arts and sciences which we have surveyed, while other nations without such principles and guidance have reverted to barbarism. Varna-ashrama-dharma was the mechanism devised by the seers who had a vision of the One and who looked at life as a whole. By releasing India's energies from internal conflict and retrograde process of selection, they laid the foundations of an enduring civilization, firm and true. It was a civilization of mutual aid, harmony, dharma. Observant scholars of the West have not failed to notice the spiritual significance of the varna-ashrama-dharma and given it its due meed of praise.<sup>1</sup>

These principles formed the background of the Indian social organization; on them was built a superstructure of social institutions, such as education, marriage, family and the state. A brief outline of these institutions, with a view to indicate their structure, content and function is all that can be attempted here.

<sup>1</sup> Writing of this varna-ashrama-dharma, Augustus Comte, the great French sociologist, wrote in his *Positive Sociology*: "No institution has ever shown itself more adapted to honour, ability of various kinds than this polytheistic organisation. . . . In a social view, the virtues of the system are not less conspicuous. Politically, its chief attribute was stability. . . . As to the influence on morals, this system was favourable to personal morality, and yet more to domestic, for the spirit of caste was a mere extension of the family spirit. . . . As to social morals, the system was evidently favourable to respect for age and homage to ancestors."

## VI. EDUCATION

### **Education and environments**

The most significant feature of education was the emphasis placed on the location of institutions in spots of natural beauty, away from the haunts of men. If the wisdom of spirit and the treasures of scientific, literary and artistic achievements were to be handed down to the future generations, if both the teacher and the student were to be saved from being sucked into the maelstrom of a confused life and given an opportunity to develop wholesome, integrated personalities, then they should be placed in environments that were conducive to their fundamental purpose. Social virtues which strengthen character were emphasised, since the character of the individual determines the course of civilization. Intellectual pursuits were wedded to life, as this alone could save the group from the doom of an unbalanced education and undisciplined personalities.

### **Sociology of knowledge : education of the whole man**

The purpose of education was to teach the student the art of living on all planes of his being, the physical, the emotional, the mental and the spiritual, and not merely earning a livelihood, to gain an increasing mastery of himself and thus release his divinity in an increasing measure. Education was not intended only for sharpening the mental tools of man, but for aiding him in his adventure of self-

discovery. A great emphasis was therefore placed on concentration and meditation (yoga) and on the study of social sciences, such as psychology, state-craft and sociology (kama, artha and dharma shastras). The student was given training in yoga which enabled him to evolve along his own lines, svadharma, through service of, and in association, with his fellowmen. Yoga helped him to resolve the chaotic dance of elements within his being into the cosmos of energetic aspiration, inward, upward, outward. Intellect was considered a dull instrument for self-discovery ; intuition alone could illumine it and tame its aggressiveness and analytical tendencies into gentler and integrative forms of behaviour. Education aimed at awakening the inner man through practice of yoga, and enabling him to see the process of life in its proper perspective.

### **The teacher**

The teacher was held in high esteem ; honour from the group was the best reward he received for the service he rendered. His self-imposed poverty as regards worldly goods, but spiritual opulence that comes from knowledge of the Self and the Vision of the Whole, ensured his independence of thought and action. The state gave financial aid to education, but left it free. This arrangement made the teacher secure from any control by the state or by wealth. Thus wisdom was assured economic security and honour in the group, while it aided the group in keeping to the path of righteousness.

### **The Universities**

In order to preserve the continuity of this national heritage and add to its richness, India built large institutions of higher learning from time to time. They served as the repositories of her spiritual, philosophical, scientific, artistic and literary achievements and as the media of transmission of this heritage to the future generations. But it was realized by the early Vedic seers that the educational institutions could only discharge their functions properly if they were isolated from the conflicting demands of the rough and tumble of the world. They, therefore, built their universities in forests, or in places of natural beauty. Nature softens the instincts of body and mind, which otherwise become harsh and aggressive when man lives in houses of brick and mortar. When man lives in the lap of nature, his emotional and mental life becomes pure and harmonious; he grows as a part of one life that surrounds him. His inner strains and stresses are reduced to the minimum, his mind is alert, his intuition awake. India, therefore, selected spots of natural beauty for locating its educational institutions.

### **The curriculum**

The universities offered instruction in a great variety of subjects. We have seen a description of the subjects studied by Narada.<sup>1</sup> This Vedic

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 72.

tradition of taking in every branch of human knowledge and looking at life as a whole, lasted for many centuries. Bana, in his *Harsha Charita*, written about the seventh century A.D., gives a description of a king's visit to one of these forest universities. He left behind his suite and proceeded on foot towards the institution. He saw from a distance a number of "Buddhists from various provinces, perched on pillows, seated on rocks, dwelling in bowers of creepers, lying in thickets or in the shadow of branches, or squatting on the roots of trees—devotees dead to all passions; Jains in white robes, mendicants, ascetics; followers of Kapila, Lokayatikas (materialists), followers of Kanada (of the atomic school), followers of Upanishads, students of legal institutions, students of the Puranas, adepts in ritual, adepts in grammar, followers of Panchatantra and others besides, all diligently following their own tenets, pondering, urging objections, raising doubts, resolving them, expounding etymologies and disputing, discussing and explaining most points."<sup>1</sup>

### Unity in diversity

Thus, a university was an institution that helped to evolve unity out of diversity. Its function was to impart an integrated picture of human knowledge with all the divergences of thought, to help to evolve unity out of diversity, and to ensure transmission of the cultural heritage to the safe-keeping of the future generations. A university was a link between the past, the present and the future.

<sup>1</sup> *Harsha Charita*, Fuhrer's edition, p. 316.

### **The early universities of India**

Among the institutions of higher learning in ancient India may be mentioned Takshasila, Benares, Nalanda, Vikramshila, Valabhi, Navadwip in Bengal, Kanchipuram and Madura. Takshasila, bearing the name of the capital of the ruler, was the oldest Hindu institution, but it gave shelter to the Buddhists as well. As early as the 7th century B.C., it attracted students from far-off countries. It was situated in a beautiful valley, with a river nearby, surrounded by hills, on a great trade route, connecting India with the Central and Western Asia. Appolonius of Tyna is said to have visited the city, according to some excavations. The Buddhist Jatakas contain 105 references to Takshasila. "The fame of Takshasila (Taxila) as a seat of learning was, of course, due to that of its teachers. They are always spoken of as being 'world-renowned,' being authorities, specialists and experts in the subjects they professed. It was the presence of scholars of such acknowledged excellence and widespread reputation that caused a steady movement of qualified students from all classes and ranks of society towards Taxila from different and distant parts of the Indian continent, making it the intellectual capital of India of those days. Thus various centres of learning in the different parts of the country became affiliated, as it were, to the educational centre or to the central University of Taxila, which exercised a kind of intellectual suzerainty over the wide world of letters in India." Takshasila was destroyed by the Huns in 455 A.D.



### Benares

Benares came into existence as a great seat of learning after the Aryans had colonized the Indus region and had advanced to the Gangetic valley. It came to be the stronghold of religion and learning where every spiritual teacher, pundit and shastri had to come, win his battles and establish his right to teach. Gautama Buddha gave his first sermon at Sarnath in 528 B.C. and started his spiritual ministry of the nation from here. Sri Sankara, Chaitanaya, Guru Nanak, Tulsidas, Kabir and many other spiritual teachers of India of various times came to Kashi to prove the validity of their message and to show it to be in conformity with India's idealism. Alberuni, the noted Arabian historian, mentioned Benares as a great seat of learning as late as the 11th century A.D. and Bernier, who visited India in the 17th century, described Benares "as a kind of University, but it resembled rather the Schools of ancients, the masters being spread over different parts of the town in private houses."<sup>1</sup>

### Nalanda

Nalanda (literally, insatiable in giving) was the famous seat of Buddhist learning. Its foundations were laid by Aryadeva, a pupil of Nagarjuna, in about the fourth century A.D., and with the liberal endowments of the Gupta rulers, it developed into a great institution of learning. Students came from

<sup>1</sup> Bernier's *Travels in India*, p. 341.

far off countries, such as Tibet, China and Turkestan. The famous Chinese scholars, Fa-Hien, Huein Tsiang and I-Tsing spent many years here. Yuan Chawang, a Chinese student at Nalanda, wrote: "In the establishment were some thousand brethren, all men of great learning and ability, several hundreds being highly esteemed and famous; the brethren were very strict in observing the precepts and regulations of their order; learning and discussing, they found the day too short. Day and night they admonished each other, juniors and seniors mutually helping to perfection. . . . Hence foreign students came to the institution to put an end to their rounds and then become celebrated and those who shared the name of Nalanda, were all treated with respect, wherever they went."<sup>1</sup>

Though Buddhism and Hinduism became arrayed in opposite philosophical camps, they were both given their places in the university curriculum. There was no intellectual isolationism of the type that characterises modern sectarian institutions of the Christian world. According to Dutt, "Buddhism never assumed a hostile attitude towards the parent religion of India; and the fact that the two religions existed side by side for long centuries increased their toleration of each other. In every country, Buddhists and orthodox Hindus lived side by side. Hindus went to Buddhist monasteries and universities, and Buddhists learned from Brahman sages. The same kings favoured the followers of both religions. The

<sup>1</sup> Watters: *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. 2, p. 165.

Gupta Emperors were often worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu, but loaded Buddhists and Buddhist monasteries with gifts, presents and favours. One king was often a Buddhist and his son an orthodox Hindu ; and often two brothers followed or favoured the two religions without fighting. Every court had learned men belonging to both the religions, and Vikramaditya's Court was no exception to the rule.”<sup>1</sup>

Nalanda was a repository of learning for the central India, a centre from which learning spread over the whole of the country. “ Medicine appears to have made great progress in the Buddhist age, when hospitals were established over the country. The great writers on Hindu medicine, Charaka and Sushruta, lived and wrote in the Buddhist Age, but their works seemed to have been recast in the Puranic Age. But it was in Astronomy that the most brilliant results were achieved in the Buddhist Age. We have seen before that astronomical observations were made as early as the Vedic Age ; that early in the Epic Age, the lunar zodiac was fixed, the position of the solstitial points marked, and other phenomena carefully observed and noted.”<sup>2</sup> Nalanda was destroyed and its library burnt in 1200 A.D. by Bakhtiyar Khilji in the time of Mohamad Ghori.

### Other institutions

Valabhi in Kathiawad was also a great seat of Hindu and Buddhist learning. It was contemporary of Nalanda, and equally famous. Vikramsilla was

<sup>1</sup> Dutt, R. C., *Civilisation in Ancient India*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 119.

situated about twenty-four miles from Bhagalpur in Bihar. It was founded in the 8th century by King Dharmapall. It had 3,000 resident students and a large library. But it met the same fate as Nalanda at the same time. Navadwip (New Island) belonged to comparatively recent times. It was founded by Sena Kings of Bengal in about 1063 A.D. and soon rose to be a great centre of learning. It imparted instruction in Vedas, Vedangas, Six Systems, specially Nyaya. Chaitanya was a product of Navadwipa. It had 500—600 students, when Mr. A. H. Wilson visited in 1821, drawn from Bengal, Assam, Nepal and South India. In 1867, Professor Cowell recorded his opinion in these words : “ I could not help looking at these unpretending lecture-halls with a deep interest, as I thought of the pundits lecturing there to generation after generation of eager, inquisitive minds. Seated on the floor with his ‘corona’ of listening pupils round him, the teacher expiates on those refinements of infinitesimal logic which makes a European’s brain dizzy to think of, but whose labyrinth a trained Nadia student will thread with unfaltering precision.”<sup>1</sup>

South India developed its own institutions, equally famous for learning and catholicity of interests. Kanchipuram, modern Conjeevaram, was one such institution of learning. It came to be known as Dakshina Kasi, Southern Kasi. Huien Tsang visited it about 642 A.D. and found Vaishnavite and Shaivite

<sup>1</sup> Key, *Indian Education in Ancient and Later Times*, p. 145.

Hindus, Digambara Jains and Mahayana Buddhists studying together.

Madura Sangham was another seat of learning. The Sangham was known for its learning and academic prestige. Writing about the Tamil institutions, Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar remarks : " There are two features with regard to these assemblies that call for special remark. The first, the academies were standing bodies of the most eminent men among the learned men of the time in all branches of knowledge. The next, it was the approval of this learned body that set the seal of authority on the works presented to it."<sup>1</sup>

Scholars were honoured irrespective of the sex. To continue the abovementioned writer : " A Ruler of Tanjore, poet, musician, warrior, and administrator, did extraordinary honour to a lady of Court, by name Ramachandramba, who composed an epic on the achievements of her patron, Raghunatha Nayaka of Tanjore. It appears that she was accorded honour of Kanaka-Ratna Abhisheka (bath in gold and gems). She was, by assent of the Court, made to occupy the position of " Emperor of Learning."<sup>2</sup>

#### Education during the Muslim rule

The lust for conquest and destruction did not make the Mohamadan conquerors of India blind to the demands of education and learning. They respected

<sup>1</sup> Aiyangar, Krishnaswami S., *The Calcutta Review*, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Opus Cit.*, p. 49.

the learned, supported them and considered it an act of religious piety to encourage education. But education was a private affair; the rulers never sought to control it. They gave land-grants, donated revenues of villages to institutions, but kept education free of governmental control. Education continued to be considered a religious and spiritual function; religion permeated it at every point. There was emphasis on study of religious books, but there was a wide range of subjects; grammar, rhetoric, logic, geometry, astronomy, law, metaphysics were also taught. These new-comers soon became softened, and after an initial period of destruction of universities and libraries, accepted the dictates of reason and themselves established institutions reminiscent of the old Hindu and Buddhist universities. Their institutions also were placed in beautiful natural settings; their purpose was to train the young in the arts of self-mastery, meditation, service of fellow-men. Professor Narendranath Law gives an interesting account of a college built by Sultan Firoz Shah:

“The Madrassah was a very commodious building, embellished with lofty domes and situated in an extensive garden, adorned with alleys and avenues, and all that human art combined with nature could contribute to make the place fit for meditation. An adjacent tank mirrored in its shiny and placid breast a high and massive house of study, standing on its brink. What a charming sight it was when the Madrassah hummed with hundreds of busy students, walking its clean and smooth floors, diverting themselves on the side of tank, or listening in attentive

masses to the learned lectures of the professors from their respective seats!"<sup>1</sup>

### **All-inclusive character of education during Akbar's reign**

Sultan Sikandar invited scholars from Arabia, Persia and Central Asia. Mahmud Shah was a great patron of letters, studied various sciences and built an observatory. The Moslem rulers of Bijapur, Ahmednagar and Junpur, built colleges and libraries which may be seen standing even to-day. But we see the catholicity of this spirit shining out when we come to the time of Akbar, the Great. Unable to read and write himself, he invited to his Ibadat Khana, the House of Prayer, "Sufies, doctors, preachers, lawyers, Sunnis, Shias, Brahmans, Jains, Buddhists, Charvakas, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and learned men of every belief." They met and argued on "profound points of science, the curiosities of history, the wonders of nature." The sacred books of the Hindus were translated into Persian, the court language. The following passage from *Aina Akbari*, the Manual of Polity, written by Akbar's great minister, Abul Fazal, gives us an idea of the type of education that was imparted to the people in those times. "In every country, but specially in Hindusthan, boys are kept for years at school, where they learn the consonants and vowels. A great portion of the life of students is wasted in making them read many books. His Majesty orders that every schoolboy should first learn to write the letters of the alphabet,

<sup>1</sup> Law, Narendranath, *Promotion of Learning in India During the Muhammadan Rule*, p. 60.

and also learn to trace several forms. He ought to learn the shape and name of each letter, which may be done in two days, when the boy should proceed to write the joined letters. They may be practised for a whole week, after which the boy should learn some prose and poetry by heart and then commit to memory some verses to the praise of God or moral sentences, each written separately. Care is to be taken that he learns to understand everything himself, but the teacher may assist him a little. He then ought for some time to be daily practised in writing a hemstitch or a verse, and will soon acquire a current hand. The teacher ought specially to look after five things : knowledge of letters, meanings of words, the hemstitch, the verse and the former lesson. If this method of teaching be adopted, a boy will learn in a month or even less, what it took others years to understand, so much so that people will get quite astonished. Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, notation, peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiology, household matters, the rules of government, medicine, logic, the physical, the mathematical and religious sciences, and history ; all of which must be gradually acquired. In studying Sanskrit, students ought to learn the Viyakarna, Niyai, Vedanta and Patanjali. No one should be allowed to neglect those things which the present time requires. These regulations shed a new light on schools and cast a bright lustre over the madrassahs.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Keay : *Opus Cit.*, pp. 121-123.



Thus, India maintained a continuity of her educational idealism, from the Vedic times to the middle of the seventeenth century A.D., so much so that even a Moslem ruler insisted on study of the various Systems of Thought! The process of cultural assimilation has an unbroken record in this as in other aspects of India's life.

### **Aurangzeb's emphasis on all-round education**

Akbar's successors maintained the traditions of their illustrious ancestor. Aurangzeb's admonition to his tutor, who came to greet him on his accession to the throne, makes interesting reading even in these far-off days. It enables us to understand the meaning and purpose of an all-round education aimed at in those days, something which the present-day India can imitate with great advantage. Asks Aurangzeb of his tutor: "What is it you have of me, Doctor? Can you reasonably desire that I should make you one of the chief Omrahs of my court? Let me tell you, if you had instructed me, as you should have done, nothing would be more just; for I am of this persuasion, that a child well educated and instructed is as much, at least, obliged to his master as to his father. But where are those good documents you have given me? In the first place, you have taught me that all Frangistan (so it seems they call Europe) was nothing but I know not what little island, of which the greatest king was he of Portugal, and next to him of Holland, and after him he of England; and as to the other kings, as those of France and Andalusia, you have represented

them to me as our petty rajahs, telling me that they, the kings of Indostan, were . . . the great kings, the conquerors and kings of the world ; and those of Persia and Usbec, Kashgar, Tartary and Cathay, Pegu, China and Matchina did tremble at the image of the kings of Indostan. Admirable geography ! You should rather have taught me exactly to distinguish all those states of the world, and well to understand their strength, their ways of fighting, their customs, religions, governments and interests ; and by the perusal of solid history, to observe their rise, progress and decay ; and whence, how, and by what accidents and errors those great changes and revolutions of empires and kingdoms have happened. I have scarce learned of you the names of my grand sires, the famous founders of this empire ; so far were you from having taught me the history of their life, and what course they took to make such great conquests. You had a mind to teach me the Arabian language, to read and write. I am much obliged, forsooth, for having made me lose so much time upon a language that requires ten to twelve years to attain to perfection ; as if the son of a king should think it to be an honour to him to be a grammarian or some doctor of the law, and to learn other languages than of his neighbours when he can well be without them ; he to whom time is so precious for so many weighty things, which he ought by times to learn. As if there were any spirit that did not with some reluctancy, and even with a kind of debasement, employ itself in so sad and dry an exercise, so lonesome and tedious, as is that of

learning words.”<sup>1</sup> Bernier, who was contemporary of Aurangzeb, remarks: “Thus did Aurangzeb resent the pedantic instructions of his tutors; to which it is affirmed in that court that . . . he added the following reproof. ‘Know you not that childhood well governed, being a state which is ordinarily accompanied with an happy memory, is capable of thousands of good precepts and instructions, which remain deeply impressed the whole remainder of a man’s life, and keep the mind always raised for great actions? The law, prayers and sciences, may they not as well be learnt in our mother-tongue as in Arabic? You told my father Shah Jehan that you would teach me philosophy. ’Tis true, I remember very well, that you have entertained me for many years with airy questions of things that afford no satisfaction at all to the mind, and are of no use in human society, empty notions and mere fancies, that have only this in them, that they are very hard to understand and very easy to forget . . . I still remember that after you had amused me, I know not how long, with your fine philosophy, all I retained of it was a multitude of barbarous and dark words, proper to bewilder, to perplex and tire out the best wits, and only invented the better to cover the vanity

<sup>1</sup> It would be well to take to heart these remarks of Aurangzeb in regard to Arabic of which so much is made by our Moslem friends to-day. The Sind Government, under advice of fanatics of the type of Aurangzeb’s tutor, is arabicising the Sindhi language and has under contemplation an Arabic University for the Moslem children. Under-nourished, ill-clad, these little children, coming from the peasant class, will have to devote years of their lives to a study of a language which has nothing to add to the political, economic, cultural or social advancement of India.

and ignorance of men like yourself, that would make us believe that they know all, and that under those obscure and ambiguous words are hid great mysteries which they alone are capable to understand. If you had seasoned me with that philosophy which formeth the mind to ratiocination, and insensibly accustoms it to be satisfied with nothing but solid reasons, if you had given me the excellent precepts and doctrines which raise the soul above the assaults of fortune, and reduce her to an unshakable and always equal temper, and permit her not to be lifted by prosperity nor debased by adversity ; if you had taken care to give me the knowledge of what we are and what are the first principles of things, and had assisted me in forming in my mind a fit idea of the greatness of the universe and of the admirable order and motions of the parts thereof ; if, I say, you had instilled into me this kind of philosophy, I should think myself incomparably more obliged to you than Alexander was to his Aristotle, and believe it my duty to recompense you otherwise than he did him. Should you not, instead of your flattery, have taught me somewhat of that point so important to a king, which is, what the reciprocal duties are of a sovereign to his subjects and those of his subjects to his sovereign ; and ought not you to have considered that one day I should be obliged with the sword to dispute my life and my crown with my brothers ? . . . Have you ever taken any care to make me learn what it is to besiege a town, or to set an army in array ? For these things I am obliged to others, not at all to you. Go, and return to the village whence you are come, and let

nobody know who you are or what is become of you.' ”

Never has a king been so conscious of the need of his spiritual and intellectual equipment for the proper discharge of his royal duties ! But what interests us here is the continuity of the idealism of education from pre-Christian era to the close of the seventeenth century ! Aurangzeb, unfortunately painted by historians in dark colours (though subsequent research shows him to be a man of liberal views) had imbibed an ideal of education in conformity with the typically Indian approach to the problem. He demanded an all-round education befitting his regal position and responsibilities. It is when India lost this vision of education of the whole man, adequately adjusted to the climate of the times and befitting the individual's status and endowments, that her decline began, and the present-day India should take Aurangzeb's words to heart, emphasising what he very appropriately called “the law, prayers and sciences,” which, in modern language, mean humanities, and the sciences of adjustment to one's self to the universe and to the group.

## VII. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

### **Man and woman make an organic whole**

It was on this organic unity of life and thought that was based the Indian conception of woman, marriage, family, economic structure of society and state-craft. India held woman in high esteem, and in no literature in the world do we come across stronger, purer and nobler types of womanhood as we do in that of India. Woman was considered a partner in the creative processes of the cosmos, and she was portrayed as an embodiment of every ideal, virtue and grace for man to admire and adore. Man and woman were complementary to each other. Each sex was to evolve distinct traits of character in accordance with its biological endowments and cultural and vocational requirements. Man and woman together made an organic whole. No attempt was made to bridge the difference, to turn man into woman and *vice versa*, which would only turn back the hands of the clock of human progress. Unsexing of species was a violation of nature's laws and functions.

### **Male and female Trinities of Hindu Pantheon**

The separation of sexes was nature's necessity for completing the process of creation, and the Hindu conception of the Creator was dual, half-man, half-woman, *arda-nari-ishwara*. Both sexes were divine, and each had its part to play in the world drama. The sex distinction was not found at the human level

but in all the kingdoms of nature. The Devas had their Devis ; the Trinity of the Hindu pantheon had their consorts, Parvati, Lakshmi and Sarasvati. This was only a dual manifestation of one life, one Being.

### **Woman, an embodiment of feeling**

Half of the Divine Being incarnated as woman ; this half was dedicated to creativeness, to building of forms, to nourishing and guarding of those forms. This was the mother-side of Life, whose essential nature was love, compassion, feeling, as intellect or reason was that of the other half, the man. This vision of the woman determined her functions in the social cosmos. Thus, in all situations requiring exertion of energy, there is the female manifestation of the divine. In the Divine Woman, the Goddess-side of life, all power was manifested, all protection sought. The Divine Mother was the refuge of the world, and at Her feet all the worlds gained rest. This was India's attitude towards woman.

### **Equal opportunities for literary pursuits**

With his attitude towards woman, India did not deny her the right to take to religious and literary pursuits. There existed a class of women who did not enter into married life. They were known as Brahmavadins, teachers of the Vedas. They wore the sacred thread, kindled the ritual fires, studied and taught the Vedas, wore ascetic robes, lived in their own homes or went about teaching the masses, carrying on debates and discussions on subtle points of religion and philosophy. Some of their utterances found their way into the Vedas. Such women were

treated as teachers and were given their due recognition.

### **An ideal wife**

An ideal wife, according to Indian view, shows forth perfect, unbounded love and deep reverence as the distinguishing traits of her being. She shows a fidelity that knows no change or shadow of turning, a courage that holds on against all odds, a love that does not falter under any strain, a strength that never wavers, no matter how great the difficulty. The husband's duty is to give unfailing kindness, tenderness, power and protection, determination to guide, unfaltering trust and fidelity. In the union of the two was their mutual fulfilment, and the noblest relations and virtues characteristic of mankind were gathered up to form a whole.

### **Marriage, a means of completion**

Marriage was, therefore, a medium for bringing together the two distinct halves of life, man and woman. Husband and wife were not two separate entities capable of division, but two halves constituting an entire, single, organic whole. It was in their wholeness that perfect humanity could manifest itself. There was no conflict between the sexes. Both found their completion in each other. The marriage was much more than a biological necessity. It was a sacrament, based on psychic unity of the two parts, and it could not be easily repudiated. "A man receives his wife from the Gods, he is linked with her from the past," says Manu (IX.95). The



two comrades, joined in wedlock, were to aid each other in their live's travail. No ritual or sacrament was considered valid without the partnership of one's wife.

Nature had imprinted on the physical and psychical make-up of woman the functions she was to discharge in her life. She typified the grace and strength of emotion, the profundity and height of love, as man typified intellect. When the two were united in marriage, intellect gave the directing force, and emotion supplied the impulsive power, and the two together resulted in right action. The two thus blended together, worked as a perfect whole and gave the ideal of human type towards which humanity could aspire. Anything that destroyed unity, that separated man and wife in life and interest, that drew them apart and ranged them in competition with each other, was fatal to social solidarity and progress.

### **Family : the matrix of civilization**

The family was considered as a basic social institution. Marriage failed in its function if it did not eventuate in the birth of a child to continue the race and ensure transmission of the cultural heritage. Marriage should culminate in family ; family was the first primary group, the matrix of civilization. " A perfect man consists of man, wife and child " (Manu : IX.45). Family was nature's " practical syllogism."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thus India knew the sociological significance of family some thousands of years before the late Professor C. H. Cooley, of Michigan University, propounded his theory of primary and secondary groups in the U.S.A. in about 1909.

**Family, its sociological significance**

The constituent unit of social organization was not the individual, but the family. Through its medium, the child received initiation into the cultural heritage of the group, was taught personal and social virtues, and was enabled to discharge his various 'debts' to the living and the dead. He developed social attitudes of co-operation and friendship and altruism. The educative influence of his father and mother on the growing child was incalculable. In the family, the individual alone could discharge the "five debts" to the ancient teachers and the guides of the race by proper study and a life of the spirit; to the Gods by appropriate acts of devotion and ritual; to the ancestors by feeding and caring for the poor and the sick; to the nature-elements by tending and proper care of the vegetable and the animal kingdoms; and to the humanity by caring for the younger generation, which will come to the helm of social affairs. The family institution was not intended merely for procreation. "The first child was a child of duty; others were born of desire," says Manu. Thus, the family became the pivotal institution of the social order where the whole range of life, the past and the present and the future, the visible and the invisible, above, around and below, became co-ordinated into an organic whole and gave a vision of the larger life. Man grew up here, not as a stranger to this cosmos, engaged in the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, but as a comrade, sustained in his efforts to reach the deeper and higher realms of his being,

by all the orders of life. Here, he knew that he was united with all creation around him by bonds of duties. His life of obligations, of joint partnership with the group, commenced with his birth and ended with his death. The family was a miniature of the social and the spiritual cosmos.

## VIII. THE STATE

### **Need for political organization**

But it is in the planning of her political life that India's spiritual insight, æsthetic sense of harmony, intellectual vigour for organization and opulent vitality found fullest manifestation. Life of human beings must be organized. Without organization that exercised some form of control over the centrifugal propensities of the individual and at the same time afforded him opportunities for self-discovery, self-fulfilment, self-sacrifice, there was danger of man continuing to function at the low level of the animal. According to Aitreya Upanishad, even the Gods were helpless against the forces of disintegration and darkness (asuras) when they had no leader to co-ordinate their activities !

### **Village : a sociological laboratory**

In India, the village became the social, political, economic and religious laboratory. Its significance as one of the chief instruments for preservation of group values was never lost sight of. The village was a republic by itself, and the country was only a congeries of them. Kings came and went, but the village remained. It was the "indestructible atom" of the Indian civilization, as Elphinstone put it.

### **Location**

The Silpa Shastra, an ancient treatise on Indian architecture, gives detailed instructions with regard

to the location of the village: "The site of the village was to be carefully chosen according to principles, ritualistic and sanitary, observed in the traditions of the Indo-Aryan master-builders . . . They were generally on the bank of a river, by the sea-shore or the side of a lake, so that ample bathing facilities were easily available. Bathing was regarded as a religious rite in itself, and a necessary preliminary for sacrificial rites. . . . The soil of the proposed site was examined to ascertain whether it was fit for cultivation and whether good drinking water was procurable sufficiently near the surface."<sup>1</sup>

### Grouping of villages

Detailed instructions are given in some of the old Hindu treatises on polity with regard to founding of new villages and their groupings. Kautilya says: "Villages consisting of not less than a hundred families and of not more than 500 families of agricultural people, with boundaries extending as far as a krossha or two (krossha was three miles), and capable of protecting each other, shall be formed. Boundaries shall be denoted by a river, mountain, forests, bulbous plants, caves, artificial buildings or by trees."<sup>2</sup>

### Social welfare

The village owned the land on which it lived and worked. There were three public buildings: the

<sup>1</sup> Hewitt, J. F., *The Ruling Races of Pre-historic Times*, p. 52. Havel describes at length the religious symbolism connected with the planning of the village, as given in the Silpa Sastra. See his *The History of Aryan Rule in India*, pp. 22-26. See also *Town Planning in Ancient India*, P. K. Acharya, Vols. 1-7, Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Kautilya, *Arthashastra*, translated by Shastri, Book 11, para 46.

school, where education was given to the children ; the rest-house for entertaining guests ; the temple, with its tank, where people worshipped. There were also the village smithy, the mill, the panchayat-hall for public meeting. Other equipment of the village was tanks, irrigational canals, good roads. The remainder of the land was occupied by house-sites of the villagers and open spaces. Every house had a yard and a vegetable garden. Detailed instructions were laid down for planting of flower beds and fruit trees. Lists of fruit-bearing trees are given as also instructions for manuring them. "The people produce for purposes of hospitality. The visitor was met by the village-watchman, taken to the rest-house, properly attended to, his weapons and belongings well-guarded. The visit over, he was conducted back to the village boundary, given his weapons and belongings. The watchman was responsible for the goods if they were stolen. Meetings of the village assembly were held in the public hall which also served as a meeting place for social intercourse, general conversation, debates and contests, indoor games and entertainment, when the assembly was not working."<sup>1</sup>

### **Village economy**

Let us now turn to the village economy. It seems that every village had a number of looms in common and the weavers were supported by the common village fund. Any other looms in the village were considered unauthorized. But a very significant

<sup>1</sup> Mookerjee, Radhakumud, *Local Government in Ancient India*, pp. 171 ff.

phase of the village economy was the localization of trades. Mukerjee remarks : " Suburban villages grew up to serve the cities where certain small crafts were exclusively localized ; e.g., smith villages of 1,000 families ; villages of wood workers numbering 500 and sometimes towns containing 1,000 families ; and villages famous for potters. There were also crafts localized in special quarters of the cities ; sometimes the crafts were associated with special streets named after them in the cities ; e.g., the Washerman's street in Asitainjana, the Vaisya-street and quarter."<sup>1</sup>

### **Absence of money economy**

There was no money economy in the village. The absence of money as a medium of exchange eliminated all causes of human misery and distress, while its introduction into the village of to-day has meant not only the ruin of its economic organization but also increased thousand-fold the poverty, the hunger and the misery of the villager. The need for money was rarely felt in the community since it produced all the necessities of life and had very little need for exchange with the outside world. The general prosperity depended upon the crops and everyone shared in them. No one experienced any inconvenience by using the grain as a means of exchange of labour.

### **The panchayat and its functions**

The most significant political institution in the village was the panchayat. The panchayat was a

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* It is interesting to note that the highly industrialised nations of the West have realised the significance of this decentralisation of industry and the city.

universal phenomenon throughout India, and, notwithstanding hostility of the British administration, has continued to survive in several parts of the country. In the village, the heads of families voted for committee-men of wards ; twelve of these formed the communal committee which was more or less an executive body to which only those advanced in age and with ripe experience were admitted. Then, there were the garden committees, the tank committees and others dedicated to "preservation and maintenance of public halls, temples, tanks, rest-houses, wells for supply of drinking water to travellers, construction of water-courses and places of worship, protection against incursions of wicked people, and relief of the distressed. They organized the village charities not only for secular relief in famine, but so that the poor might have religious administrations, including the purifying rites and arrangements for cremation of dead paupers, and other religious necessities. The carrying on of irrigation works was one of the chief functions and for them compulsory labour was used. Many of the tanks were endowed. If one failed to perform the required labour, his lands were sold."<sup>1</sup>

The village panchayat is described by western scholars as a republic in miniature. But it is essential that we should understand its techniques of transacting business, of the formation of public opinion, and of the method of arriving at decisions.

<sup>1</sup> Mukerjee : *Opus Cit.*, p. 132.



### **The method of election**

In the first place, the election of a few from amongst the equals to discharge familiar and well-known duties is different from the election of people on the basis of privilege and right. The village life enforced obligations rather than rights. Every one was at liberty to take part in the discussion. All possible avenues were sought and that which met with the general approval was unanimously adopted. In his report on the Archæological Survey for India for 1904, Sir Herbert Risley remarks : " The method by which the panchayat is elected cannot be expressed in terms of European political phraseology. The people sit together, and they talk and evidently an opinion emerges from their talk which is the opinion of all of them. There is no majority for there is unanimity ; there is no minority for the minority being talked over casts in with the lot of the majority. The process can be described as election by acclamation in the way the ancient Greek and Roman bodies were elected, the oldest methods of election in the world." This expression of general opinion was not a matter of intellect but of feeling and understanding. Every cleavage of interest became synthesised into the common good-will, loka sangraha.

### **Functions of the panchayat : Justice**

The panchayat also worked as a judicial body and decided suits of all kinds : petty quarrels, division of property, land disputes, divorce, disputes between village artisans, etc. If any villager became dis-

obedient and refused to accept the punishment awarded, the panchayat isolated him from all social contact. No one talked to him, allowed him to enter his house or exchange fire. Not unoften he was even forbidden to take water from the village well. This was the most condign punishment meted out to a recalcitrant. The headman also possessed powers of criminal justice.

### **Irrigation**

The village panchayat also looked after the means of irrigation, since its very life depended on the disposal of water. According to Mathai, "The arrangements made by the village panchayat for the organization and maintenance of its public works such as wells, tanks, channels, roads and buildings constitute a notable feature of village government. The most important of these works to which the community has devoted special attention, as is to be expected in a country so predominantly agricultural, is the maintenance of sufficient water supply for agricultural as well as domestic purposes. In all provinces where the condition of the land has called for irrigation, some kind of systematic arrangement has been set up by custom, in many cases to be traced to remote times, not merely for making and maintaining tanks and channels but for distributing water and for settling certain disputes arising out of it. A usual element in these arrangements is the institution of village communal labour by which a member of the community is required to contribute

his share of labour or expenses required for the upkeep of the works in his village.”<sup>1</sup>

### Health and sanitation

The sanitation of the village was very carefully looked after. We come across distinct rules and regulations scattered throughout such books as the Dharmasastras, the Mahabharata and the Arthasastra. The Mahabharata prohibits sanitary malpractices “on a field where crops are grown, or too near an inhabited village, or on a piece of water.” The Code of Manu gives a similar rule in regard to the King’s High Way. Some village communities laid down rules about the deposit of heaps of manure and the disposal of human and animal corpses.

### Religion

Each village had its own priest. Religion was regarded as an essential part of social life and there was not a community that did not have a temple dedicated to God. The priest played an important part in the social life of the community as did the teacher. Both were almost synonymous. The village had its bard and poet, who sang to the people religious and sacred lore of the land. The national literature of India was much appreciated by the people. Describing this phase of the home life Professor Gilbert Slater remarks : “In every peasant home a member of the family reads the stories from the Puranas to other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listened with rapt attention and sometimes engaged in a

<sup>1</sup> Mathai, John, *Village Government in British India*, p. 133.

lively discussion. The chief member of the house was expected to know by heart some of the sacred lore which he recited every morning, and evening and during the leisure hours of noon. Even the illiterate peasant of India in a village had something of the philosophy of life, as given in Hindu culture, transmitted to him through the agency of the family."

### **Entertainment**

Rasa-lila was the most important form of amusement. This simple rustic performance of some of the sublime episodes of the Indian Epics and the Puranas released a great deal of devotion, evoked exquisite form of worship, gave a living potency to religious and spiritual values that have been India's heritage. When the harvest was over and the hard work finished, the peasants had plenty of leisure on their hands, either to organize rasa-lila among themselves or invite the travelling troupes. The amusement became a powerful source of enlightenment and emotional catharsis.

### **Village, a basic social unit**

This is a rough sketch of the village community of India in and through which India preserved the vital elements and principles of her culture. The village, like the family, was another basic social unit, a synthesis of various phases of associated life of human beings, a mechanism for preservation of values. It was on the village that India raised a superstructure of nationhood, with varying successes and set-backs, as we shall see presently. Empires came and went, kings

changed their crowns in quick succession, the village continued undisturbed. Megasthenes noticed this as early as the beginnings of the Christian era, when he wrote : " Whereas among other nations it is usual in the contest of war to ravage the soil, and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste, among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even if battle is raging in the neighbourhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger ; for the combatants on either side, in waging the conflict, make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides they never ravage an enemy's land with fire nor cut down its trees." It looks as though it was a religious convention between the combatants to leave the village unmolested. This fact also explains the utter absence of any revolution in India. Politics touched a fringe of life of the people, India never suffered from obsession of politics. Society was larger than the state.

#### **Opinion of Sir Charles Metcalfe**

Sir Charles Metcalfe gives a succinct description of these village republics in the following manner : " The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they want. . . . They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down ; revolution succeeds to revolution ; Hindu, Pathan, Moghul, Mahratta, Sikh and English are all masters in turn ; but the village community remains the same. In times of trouble they arm and

fortify themselves ; an hostile army passes through the country, the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance, but, when the storm has passed over, they return and resume their occupations. If a country remains for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceful possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the place of their fathers ; the same site for the village, the same positions for the houses, the same lands will be reoccupied by descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated ; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will not often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with access. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little estate in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Metcalfe, Sir Charles, *Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons*, 1832, Vol. III, Appendix 84, p. 331.

**Urbanization kept under control**

Thus, India sought to combine the cultural and the agricultural functions in the village and the village constituted the nucleus of Indian civilization. India did not develop large cities ; urbanization was kept under control. Indeed, urbanization was looked down upon with disfavour. "Let him avoid going into towns," says Apastamba (1.32), while Baudharyana is more emphatic. "It is impossible for one to attain salvation who lives in a town covered with dirt" (11.3). The city is covered with "dirt" of all sorts, physical, mental, moral ; it is a refuge of crime and the criminal. The urban contacts are secondary and superficial. India built her universities in small towns and forests where nature and human needs create neighbourhood and foster community of interests.

**Abundance of political speculation**

It is not only in the planning of the village life and government that India reveals her genius, but also in the realms of political thought and statecraft. There is no nation of ancient times that can lay claim to such abundance of political speculation, combined with scientific public administration, as India. Beginning with Manu, the history of political thinking and experimentation continues unbroken unto comparatively recent times. Politics, like other aspects of life, is an outward manifestation of a people's genius, and political thought is a mirror of

their capacity for social organization and progress. India, during many millenia, had nursed a succession of political thinkers and teachers, who did not desist from putting their knowledge to test through practical statecraft.

### **The State and its constituent elements**

According to Indian thinkers, the constituent elements of a state were seven : (i) the king (swami), (ii) ministers (amatyas), (iii) allies (subrat), (iv) treasure (losa), (v) territory (rashtra), (vi) fortress (durga) and (vii) army (bala). When they speak of a king, they mean a leader who can preserve order and put an end to the 'logic of the fish' in which the strong devoured the weak. Bhishma tells Yudishtra that there was no king, no sovereignty, no punisher and no punishment in Krita Yuga. All men protected one another, actuated by a sense of dharma, social solidarity. But with passage of time, the human propensity of self-assertion manifested itself, kama, moha, lobha, and raga (desire, error, greed and lust) swayed men's minds, righteousness perished and men sought Brahma's aid, who there-upon outlined principles of a human social order (purush-arthas) of which works of Brahaspati, Sukra and other authors on sociological and political subjects were abridgments. The king was often elected, even when this principle of election was combined with that of heredity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For copious evidences of election of the king, see *Corporate Life in Ancient India*, by R. C. Mazumdar, 1918.



**Dharma : ecological balance**

The king was administrator of dharma. He was to be guided by this principle of balance, harmonious relationships between all kingdoms of nature, mineral, vegetable, animal and man, various groups and administrative units. Dharma was the underlying principle of political, economic and social relations in a state, and this principle was to be extended even to the earth and its products. We catch a glimpse of this knowledge of ecological balance in the coronation oath which was administered to a king. Aitareya Brahmana gives the promise which Purohita took from the king to the following effect : "Between the night I am born and the night I die whatever good I might have done, my heaven, my life, my progeny, may I be deprived of, if I oppress you." (Book VIII, Chap. 4). Satapatha Brahmana states that the king should take consent of the earth at the time of the Rajasuya ceremony thus : "Mother Prithvi, injure me not, nor I thee." It was a bounden duty of the king to see to it that the earth was not subjected to undue strain, her resources not unduly depleted. The earth was the mother, she sustained life with her products. Somadev in his *Niti Vakyamrita* gives a hymn which it was incumbent upon the king to recite every day : "I am protecting this cow (earth) which bears the milk of four oceans, whose calf is dharma, whose tail is enterprise (purushartha), whose hoofs are varna and ashrama (four groups and four orders), whose ears are desire and action (kama and artha), whose horns are diplomacy and valour, whose eyes

are truth and purity, and whose face is law. I shall not be patient with any one who injures her.”<sup>1</sup>

This is probably the earliest record in all human history of man's clear realization of the ecological balance which it was one of the primary duties of the state to preserve. Nations that have flouted this most significant fact of social life have disappeared and their wrecks lie scattered along the shores of history. India knew this principle and honoured it in practice.<sup>2</sup>

### King, subject to dharma

The tendency of kingship to become hereditary was controlled by election of the king and his dismissal if he failed to discharge his allotted duties. Manu says that a king who does not protect his people but only receives their taxes will sink into disrepute and take upon himself the burden of the sufferings of his people. (Chap. VIII, pp. 307-308). Both *Anusasana* and *Santi Purvas* in *Mahabharata* suggest a death-sentence on a king who pretends to be a protector of his people but who is unable to discharge his duties. (Chaps. 61 and 92 respectively). The relations between the king and his people should be the same as between a father and his children. Kalidasa, in his *Raghuvamsa*, says that Raghu came to be called

<sup>1</sup> *Niti Vakyamrita*, Jaingranthamala edition, p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> But with passage of time, this principle was forgotten; our present-day leaders and thinkers seem to be ignorant of it. Even so seasoned a jurist and scholar as Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar fails to recognize the full implications of this Oath of Coronation. See his Rt. Honorable Srivisa Sastri Lecture, delivered to the University of Madras some years ago.

Rajan because he made himself loveable to his subjects. Unity between the ruler and ruled was emphasised upon. "If a king, without violence to his dharma, does good to all his subjects, he stands as firm as a rock" (Santi, Chap. 120). According to Manu, a king should behave towards his subjects as a father to his children. (Chap. VII, 80).

### Ministers

The king was assisted by a group of ministers. The government of a large territory was not possible single-handed. The king must devolve some of his duties to his ministers. Manu says that a king should have seven or eight ministers who are learned in the sciences, heroes skilled in the use of arms, descended from noble families and well-trying. He should hold deliberations with them, ascertain each minister's opinion separately and together and then decide upon his course of action.

The reader will notice Manu's emphasis on specialized skill, birth and experience, something which is missing in many a modern government. *Mahabharata*, *Santipurva*, mentions a Privy Council, composed of four Brahmins, eight Kshatriyas, twenty-one Vaisyas and three Sudras, out of which a king was to elect a Cabinet of eight ministers. Kautiliya recommends a cabinet of the size that is commensurate with the needs of the country. The ministers should initiate new works, complete those started, improve upon past accomplishments and enforce obedience to law.

### Functions of the state

The functions of the state were to be *paripalanam*, promotion of the four main interests of the individual : physical well-being, emotional expansion and refinement through satisfaction of desire for property, family, etc., right action through service of the society and spiritual unfoldment (*kama*, *artha*, *dharma* and *moksha*). The purpose of the state was not merely preservation of law and order, subordination of the individual to its all-imperious demands, but service of the individual, so that he could also pursue the path of self-fulfilment. (Manu, VIII, Mahabharata, Santi Purva, Chap. 75). *Paripalanam* was the main *dharma* of the state, and *dharma* we have defined, in terms of the general social welfare of the people, as balance between all kingdoms of nature, mineral, vegetable, animal and human (Mahabharata, Santi Parva, Chap. 109). *Dharma* is what promotes appreciation of sanctity of all life, what prevents injury to every creature and what contributes to the integrity and well-being of everybody.

### Public Administration

The administrative duties of the state should be performed as the Gods perform their own duties. These duties were :

- (1) Levying taxes and fully protecting the people, Indra, God of rain.
- (2) Establishing virtue and eradicating vice, Vayu, God of air.

- (3) Spreading dharma and dispelling adharma, Surya, Sun.
- (4) Impartial administration of justice, Yama, Death.
- (5) Realization of revenue for public protection, Agni, Fire.
- (6) Expenditure of revenue for good of the people, Varuna.
- (7) Procuring means for the happiness of the people, Chandra, Moon.
- (8) Security and increase of national wealth, Kubera<sup>1</sup>.

These functions should be discharged by the state impartially, imperceptibly and yet compassionately. A vigilant eye for the welfare of the masses (*loka sangraha*) is the primary function of the state. Narada asks Yudishtra many questions regarding the administration of his kingdom, which shows us the knowledge possessed by India's ancient thinkers regarding the essentials of ordered progress of a nation. Narada asks whether agriculturists were fully occupied with their work, whether his subjects were free to approach him without fear as if he were their father and mother, whether the cultivators were contented, whether the state maintained large tanks of water at convenient distances, whether loans of seed-grains were being advanced to agriculturists, whether officials in charge of municipal, military, trade, agriculture, justice and other affairs were

<sup>1</sup> Balkrishna, "Evolution of the State in India," *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. III, p. 324.

working in unison and whether urbanization was kept under control (Mahabharata, Shanti Parva, Chap. 5).

These, then, were said to be the duties of the state: to maintain dharma in all phases of life, to preserve and improve social order, to foster learning, education and arts, to endow universities and other cultural and religious bodies, to maintain agriculturists in happiness and contentment, to promote commerce and industry, to provide social amenities for the masses, to guard against famine and drought, to protect the people from all harm and advance their interests all round. This was India's synthetic vision which saw the ruler and the ruled as parts of one picture and subordinated neither one nor the other. The state was a manifestation of people's will to live in peace and contentment.

### **Federations**

But the principle of political integration of small states into a larger whole was also recognized. We come across many expressions, such as Panchjanaanah, Saptajanah, Virat, Samarath, Swarat and Sarwarat, indicative of the size and the power of such combinations. *Gopatha Brahman* gives various sacrifices to be performed by those who presided over such large political combinations. The nature of political unity between various states forming a Mandala, or a circle of states, is described by one author in these words: "The state in ancient India was not unitary in the strict sense of the term. It was saturated through and through with the principles of what may

conveniently be called federalism and feudalism . . . They are only meant to imply that as a general rule, a Hindu Kingdom comprised a number of feudatories who enjoyed varying degrees of autonomy, that they might themselves have sub-feudatories of a similar status under them, and so to the third, fourth and fifth degree. A big empire was partly a series of alliances, partly a series of relationships of suzerainty and vassalage, and partly an area of directly administered territory . . . Under every regime, suzerain, or feudal, the village was the ultimate unit of society.”<sup>1</sup>

This type of relationship may be compared to the one existing between the British Dominions and the mother country or between the states and the federal government in the U.S.A. The point we are emphasising is that the significance of the principle of integration of large administrative units into one state was known and adopted. When this principle was ignored and India broke up into small units, she became exposed to foreign attacks and succumbed.

### **Types of culture**

This completes our survey of the essentials of Indian culture. It was not a material culture which characterises the primitive, isolated groups of people, in which life's interests are limited to the satisfaction of the appetites of man: food, sex and shelter. The Indian culture was not æsthetical as was that of Greece. The Greek genius shone through emotion, feeling. The creative faculties of the Greeks found

<sup>1</sup> Beni Prasad, *The State in Ancient India*, pp. 504-505.

expression in wide-spread activity in arts which emphasised the beauty of form. But there is absence of symbolism in Greek art, as there is absence of contemplation in her poets and philosophers. The social organization of Greece was based on the tyrannical institution of slavery, the denial of one life. To Greeks, all aliens were barbarians. The instability of emotion made Greek culture unstable, and after a short-lived glory, it passed into the unending night of immortal memory. The modern western culture is essentially mental, aggressively masculine. Its intellectual expression is science, with emphasis on search for the secrets of the phenomenal. Control of nature is a religious creed with this culture. Its method is classification, compartmentalization, division, analysis. Intellect emphasises individuality, self-centredness. It is aggressive, acquisitive and has no argument excepting its own. Churchill and Smuts can indulge in the pleasant pastimes of waxing eloquent for the human rights and freedoms and signing Atlantic and U.N.O. Charters, while, with an amazing feat of facetious logic, they resort to policies of ruthless repression of the weaker races in their empires and still retain a unity of mind and peace of conscience ! The mental culture is commercial ; it peddles its wares throughout the world, even at the point of the bayonet. Baccy, beer, bayonet and Bible sum up its salient features. Its arts are for profit and sensuous pleasure ; it makes a business of pleasure. Its political expression is the fiction of democracy, arrogant nationalism, state sovereignty and imperialism. Its religion is



a struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, the supremacy of the economic over the spiritual. Conformity is its a code of honour. Such a culture carries in itself elements of self-destruction.

### **Indian culture : "Dominant Spirituality"**

But India avoided these unstable elements in her culture, the mercuriality of feeling and emotion and the isolating egotism of the intellect. Her culture had the firm foundation of the Vision of the One, of the Whole, and she built this culture with the aid of enlightened intuition, and we cannot do better than bring this survey to a close with a quotation from the writings of one of the greatest thinkers of this age and of all times, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. He says : " Spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind ; the sense of the infinite is native to it. India saw from the beginning,—and, even in her ages of reason and her age of increasing ignorance, she never lost hold of the insight,—that life cannot be rightly seen in the sole light, cannot be perfectly lived in the sole power of its externalities. She was alive to the greatness of the material laws and forces ; she had a keen eye for the importance of the physical sciences ; she knew how to organize the arts of ordinary life. But she saw that the physical does not get its full sense until it stands in the right relation to the supra-physical ; she saw that the complexity of the universe could not be explained in the present terms of man or seen by his superficial sight, that there were other powers behind, other powers within man himself of which he is normally

unaware, that he is conscious of only a small part of himself, that the invisible always surrounds the visible, the supra-sensible the sensible, even as infinity always surrounds the finite. She saw too that man has the power of exceeding himself, of becoming himself more entirely and profoundly than he is,—truths which have only recently begun to be seen in Europe and seem even now too great for its common intelligence. She saw the myriad gods beyond man, God beyond the gods, and beyond God His own ineffable eternity; she saw that there were ranges of life beyond our life, ranges of mind beyond our present mind, and above these she saw the splendour of the spirit. Then with that calm audacity of her intuition which knew no fear or littleness and shrank from no act whether of spiritual or intellectual, ethical or vital courage, she declared that there was none of these things which man could not attain if he trained his will and knowledge; he could conquer these ranges of mind, become the spirit, become a god, become one with God, become the ineffable Brahman. And with the logical practicality and sense of science and organized method which distinguished her mentality, she set forth immediately to find out the way. Hence from long ages of this insight and practice there was ingrained in her her spirituality, her powerful psychic tendency, her great yearning to grapple with the infinite and possess it, her ineradicable religious sense, her idealism, her Yoga, the constant turn of her art and her philosophy.

**“ Abundant Vitality ”**

“ But this was not and could not be her whole mentality, her entire spirit ; spirituality itself does not flourish on earth in the void, even as our mountain-tops do not rise like an enchantment of dream out of the clouds without a base. When we look at the past of India, what strikes us next is her stupendous vitality, her inexhaustible power of life and joy of life, her almost unimaginably prolific creativeness. For three thousand years at least,—it is indeed much longer,—she has been creating abundantly, incessantly, lavishly, with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences and creeds and arts and poems and all kinds of monuments, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychics, sciences, systems of Yoga, systems of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts,—the list is endless and in each item there is almost a plethora of activity. She creates and creates and is not satisfied and is not tired ; she will not have an end of it, seems hardly to need a space for rest, a time for inertia and lying fallow. She expands too outside her borders ; her ships cross the ocean and the fine superfluity of her wealth brims over to Judea and Egypt and Rome ; her colonies spread her arts and epics and creeds in the Archipelago ; her traces are found in the sands of Mesopotamia ; her religions conquer China and

Japan and spread westward as far as Palestine and Alexandria, and the figures of the Upanishads and the sayings of the Buddhists are re-echoed on the lips of Christ. Everywhere, as in her soil, so in her works there is the teeming of a superabundant energy of life. European critics complain that in her ancient architecture, sculpture and art there is no reticence, no holding back of riches, no blank spaces, that she labours to fill every rift with ore, occupy every inch with plenty. Be this defect or no, it is the necessity of her superabundance of life, of the teeming of the infinite within her. She lavishes her riches because she must, as the infinite fills every inch of space with the stirring of life and energy because it is infinite.

**“Strong Intellectuality ”**

“ But this supreme spirituality and this prolific abundance of the energy and joy of life and creation do not make all that the spirit of India has been in the past. It is not a confused splendour of tropical vegetation under the heavens of pure sapphire infinity. It is only to eyes unaccustomed to such wealth that there seems to be confusion in this crowding of space with rich forms of life, a luxurious disorder of excess or a wanton lack of measure, clear balance and design. For the third power of the ancient Indian spirit was a strong intellectuality, at once austere and rich, robust and minute, powerful and delicate, massive in principle and curious in detail. Its chief impulse was that of order and arrangement, but an order founded upon a seeking for the inner law and truth

of things and having in view always the possibility of conscientious practice. India has been predominantly the land of Dharma and Shastra. She searched for the inner truth and law of each human and cosmic activity, its dharma; that found, she laboured to cast into elaborate form and detailed law of arrangement its application in fact and rule of life. Her first period was luminous with the discovery of the Spirit; her second completed the discovery of the Dharma; her third elaborated into detail the first simpler formulation of the Shastra; but none was exclusive, the three elements are always present.

“ In this third period the curious elaboration of all life into a science and an art assumes extraordinary proportions. The mere mass of the intellectual production during the period from Asoka well into the Mahomedan epoch is something truly prodigious, as can be seen at once if one studies the account which reverent scholarship gives of it, and we must remember that that scholarship as yet only deals with a fraction of what is still lying extant and what is extant is only a small percentage of what was once written and known. There is no historical parallel for such an intellectual labour and activity before the invention of printing and the facilities of modern science; yet all that mass of research and production and curiosity of detail was accomplished without these facilities and with no better record than the memory and for an aid the perishable palm-leaf. Nor was all this colossal literature confined to philosophy and theology, religion and Yoga, logic and rhetoric and grammar and linguistics, poetry and drama, medicine and

astronomy and the sciences ; it embraced all life, politics and society, all the arts from painting to dancing, all the sixty-four accomplishments, everything then known that could be useful to life or interesting to the mind, even, for instance, to such practical side minutiae as the breeding and training of horses and elephants, each of which had its Shastra and its art, its apparatus of technical terms, its copious literature. In each subject, from the largest and most momentous to the smallest and most trivial, there was expended the same all-embracing, opulent, minute and thorough intellectuality. On one side there is an insatiable curiosity, the desire of life to know itself in every detail, on the other a spirit of organization and scrupulous order, the desire of the mind to tread through life with a harmonized knowledge and in the right rhythm and measure. Thus, an ingrained and dominant spirituality, an inexhaustible vital creativeness and zest of life and, mediating between them, a powerful, penetrating and scrupulous intelligence combined of the rational, ethical and æsthetical mind, each at high intensity of action, created the harmony of ancient culture.”<sup>1</sup>

But now this majestic creation of man is confronted with extinction. India is forgetting her link with the past ; she is becoming increasingly negligent of her national *sangskaras*. Every aspect of her social life reflects at present the impact of the culture of machine and science while the knowledge of the laws of cultural change and of the technique of controlling

<sup>1</sup> Goshe, Sri Aurobindo, *The Renaissance in India*, pp. 9-18.

that change with the aid of science and appropriate education is still unknown to us. India is running a race with time, and yet on the preservation of her values and culture depends the salvation of the human race. The following chapter takes up in detail the discussion of the points of conflict between the two cultures, the culture of India which we have just surveyed and that of the science and machine of the West. After this, we shall be in a position to discuss the technique of planning a synthesis of both.

#### IV. INDIA : A CONFLICT OF CULTURES

There are three terms in the title of this subject, India, conflict and culture. We have already defined India in the last chapter ; we shall now take up definitions of the remaining two terms.

##### **Types of conflict**

There are many types of conflict. When two individuals break out into blows or face each other with pistols, we call it a duel. When tribes are engaged in hostilities, it is a feud. When nations interrupt their normal methods of relationships and become busy with the tasks of mutual extermination, it is war. But there are conflicts between ideas and ideals, between modes of life, between schemes of values and forms of philosophy. There is, for instance, conflict between capitalism and communism, between materialistic and spiritual views of life, between the eastern and the western modes of life and thought. These are a few examples of conflict.

##### **Contents of culture**

There remains the definition of culture. Culture, when considered in its *individual* aspect, is what Matthew Arnold called, " the study of perfection, the disinterested search for sweetness and light," which consists in " becoming something, rather than in having something, in inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in outward set of circumstances."



This is what we mean when we say that a particular individual is a man of culture. Culture, in this sense, has a personal or an individual reference. But there is a *collective* or sociological significance of culture, and in this case, we define it as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tyler). By culture, we mean the totality of group-life, both in its objective and subjective aspects. Culture is the tool-making, institution-making, value-making ability of man. Culture is a human product, and is transmitted through communication, not through germ-plasm. No animal species is known to have culture in this sense.

A proper understanding of the contents of culture requires knowledge of the relationship between the organic and inorganic environments and their relationship to, and effects on, man and his social life. The form of social structure varies with the environments. People living on islands, in mountainous regions, in deserts, in river valleys do not possess a uniform type of social organization, and their methods of exploiting natural resources determine the shape of their arts and industries, their entertainments and their religion. Human relationships determined by the natural setting is one of the basic facts of social life. Human Ecology is the first social science which the study of culture demands.

But man has a physical body. He is born with certain biological tendencies that need to be properly understood and developed along right channels.

Biology, therefore, is another social discipline necessary for the study of social life.

Man, a cute and cunning little animal at the time of birth, develops human nature in association with human beings. He develops his faculties through processes of interaction between himself and the society. His attitudes and ideas are social products. He enters into the arena of social life to make a living, comes in conflict with other people engaged in similar tasks, accommodates himself to life and its demands and becomes assimilated into the society. Society devises certain mechanisms of social control by means of which it checks the centrifugal tendencies of its members and aids in their complete absorption. All these significant phases of study fall within the realm of Psychology.

Every child that comes to the world wears a uniform which determines the role he shall play in the social drama. It is the racial uniform. The colour of his skin, of his hair, the thickness of his lips, the structure of his nose will decide whether he shall have opportunities or obstacles in his life. Race has played a significant role in human history, and even though scientific research has not succeeded in affirming fundamental differences in the levels of intelligence of various races, there are some races that consider themselves the elect of the Gods, born to rule over the rest. Anthropology and Ethnology are, therefore, other contributory social sciences.

Men live in groups, and therefore the problems of population, in their quantitative and qualitative aspects, and the standards of living are important

aspects of social investigation, and statistics is of special significance here.

Finally, we must face the problem of values and of man's ultimate destiny. What is the good, the beautiful and the true: Ethics and Philosophy? What is at the heart of the Universe that moves man's mind, so that he counts no cost too great, no pain too severe, no agony so unbearable that he will desist from the ideal he has set out to achieve? Also, why do civilizations fail? Nations rise, attain a certain amount of stability, maturity and glory and then pass into the night of oblivion. What are the social laws that they ignore that seals their doom? Can social progress be willed and consciously achieved? Can man receive any guidance from the wrecks of the civilizations of the past and pilot his present career into a safe harbour or must human life continue to drift along like a derelict on an uncharted sea?

All this knowledge, supplied by the various social disciplines, pertaining to different segments of culture, has to be applied to the problems of social life. To study the major social institutions, such as education, marriage, family, economic, industrial and political structure, arts and crafts, the evolution of these institutions, their ossification or maladjustment, will give us a clue to the direction in which the social life of the people is moving. An important phase of study will be the types of communities, rural and urban, in which people live, and the effects of these environments on human personality. The techniques of propaganda and of formation of public opinion

must also come within this range of study. Social mobility, both horizontal and vertical, that is, from one group to another and along the sliding scale of social hierarchy, will give us an idea of the dynamics of social order. A very interesting and significant branch of study will be the anatomy of change, its obvious and imperceptible causes that culminate into crises, the techniques of recognizing the signs of an impending revolution, the methods of meeting its challenge and introducing new values and directions in the social order.

While man is imperfect, his social institutions will continue to reflect his inadequacies, and social disorganization will remain a reality to be reckoned with. Daily casualties of social life, such as old men and women, the unemployed, the mentally deficient, the criminals, the juvenile delinquents and others will have to be looked after and given a chance to live and adjust. Social welfare, the reconstruction of broken lives into living wholes, is a duty accepted by every group, primitive or advanced, and it must receive careful attention of the social planner.

### **Cultural Change**

This, then, is the field and the content of culture, and it has to be properly surveyed and studied as a unified pattern.<sup>1</sup> Culture is dynamic. It keeps

<sup>1</sup> There is one social science that has been developing in recent years that co-ordinates these various studies into one whole, and that is the Science of Sociology. Sociology lays under obligation these seven basic social sciences, such as Human Ecology, Biology, Anthropology, Psychology, Mathematics, Ethics and Aesthetics, and Philosophy and Religion. These disciplines represent factors of social life with which man commences his earthly career :

changing, and the causes of its change are numerous. Biological mutation, birth of a great mind, invention, migration from one culture-area to another and conquest of one people by another are some of the causes that can precipitate changes in the social organization or in the scheme of values of a people.

environments, physical body, racial uniform, mind, the necessity of aggregation, values, personal and social, and, finally hunger for self-fulfilment that seeks satisfaction through inward aspiration and gives birth to religious institutions. As a recent work on Sociology has it, Sociology deals with social phenomena that are in part dealt with by other social sciences, "but no social science except Sociology studies all of them, and no other social science approaches any of them solely from the point of view of a sociologist. Inasmuch as the various social sciences are studying the not-too-clearly differentiated parts of a whole, separations and classifications must be provisional and temporary. Even so, there remains something distinctive which is properly termed sociological. No satisfactory word exists to name it, and no concept has been devised to embrace it. In so far as it may be caught in a single phrase, the sociological attitude seems to represent an emphasis upon the facts of human activity in general, in which the role of specific factors, such as geography or economics, is given full recognition, but the activity is not seen exclusively from the point of view of any one of them." (Cairns, Huntington, "Sociology and Social Sciences," in *Twentieth Century Sociology*, New York, 1945, p. 5.) There is not a point in the multifarious aspects of social life where Sociology does not touch it. Sociology enables us to co-ordinate the diverse elements in a social situation in time and space and sense their interrelatedness and significance. It enables us to discard specialised interests and atomic elements, and to deal with forces, factors, interests in association with people, places, environments, work, political, economic and social institutions, art, industry, religion, as an integrated, co-ordinated whole. The only country where social studies have progressed along these lines is that of the United States of America. The entire field of social life, indicated above, is covered by specific courses of study in Human Ecology, Ethnology and Anthropology, Biology, Psychology, General and Social, Propaganda, Public Opinion, Educational Sociology, Sociology of Marriage, of Family, of Divorce, Population Problems, Race Problems, Sociology of Economic Organizations, Political Sociology, Criminology, Penology, Ethics, Esthetics and Sociology of Arts, Philosophy, and Sociology of Religion, Social, Statistics, Sociology of Knowledge, Rural Sociology, Urban Sociology, Social Change, Sociology of Revolution, Social Disorganization, Social Welfare Work, Social Administration, Social Progress, Social Thought in Ancient Civilizations of Asia, and in modern Europe and America.

Sometimes the advent of a trait from some alien culture may initiate cultural change of radical character and affect the physical and spiritual well-being of a people. Let us take a few examples to illustrate the point.

#### **Christian clothes and pneumonia**

Within a few years of introduction of clothing among the original healthy, sea-faring race of Hawaii, the race began to die out. Those children of nature danced about the surf like porpoises, with only a loin cloth. The well-meaning missionaries carried to these Hawaiians their conception of Christian modesty and sartorial conventions, and they jumped in and out of water with their clothes on. In a few years, the incidence of pneumonia shot up and the people began to die in large numbers! Release from the clothing conventions of Christian missionaries saved the remnants of the race from extinction.

#### **Kerosene lamp and social disorganization**

When the Government of the United States of America took over Alaska from Russia, the Alaskan Red Indians were a group of steady, sober people. They had their ritualistic and religious dances around their family fires, where they interpreted the play of lights and shadows as messages from their dead ancestors for their individual and group welfare. This institution of family gatherings and fires served as a powerful mechanism of social control and helped to maintain the group morality. But when a kerosene lamp came into their midst, the family gatherings

and the ritualistic dances disappeared. The physical and emotional energies found no outlet, instructions from ancestors ceased, and these innocent Alaskans fell victims to drinking. Their scheme of values was upset, their social structure became seriously disorganized. They got out of control and became a serious problem for the Federal Government. An investigation by two sociologists led to the detection of the criminal, the kerosene lamp, a trait of culture imported from another region.

### **Tin-can and amendment of the American Constitution**

When the invention of pneumatic packing appeared in the United States of America, canning industry became organized on a large scale. All types of food were canned. The tin-can released the housewife from the necessity of cooking for the family. She could get everything she wanted from the grocery store and provide a dinner for a family of two or twenty at a few minutes' notice. This gave her plenty of leisure which she utilized for self-education, for mastering the arts and sciences of home-keeping and child-rearing. She became conscious of her disabilities, educational, economic, social and political, and made bold to insist on their removal. The educational laws of the country came in for a change ; women were admitted to colleges and universities on equal terms with men. The curriculum of instruction was adapted to the woman's needs ; she demanded to be taught domestic science and home economics. She asked for equal wages with man. She demanded participation in the political councils of the nation.

She insisted on the right to vote and the Constitution of the United States of America had to find a place for her. In plain language, a tin-can led to an amendment of the American Constitution !<sup>1</sup>

These examples should suffice to illustrate what we mean by the conflict of cultures. The culture of primitive simplicity of attire of Hawaiians came into conflict with that of the clothes, the culture of the open family fire of the Alaskans with that of the kerosene lamp. The pre-canning structure of society in the U.S.A. had to be accommodated to that of the

<sup>1</sup> If a tin-can could precipitate an amendment of the American Constitution, an atom-bomb is bound to lead to its nullification, and in time, complete abrogation. Some of the social and cultural changes that will have to be faced by the United States of America will be so great that they may alter the whole pattern of her life. General staff experts in various countries are convinced that many nations will have atom-bombs in a few years' time, that there is no defence against the atom-bomb, and that "a single fusillade of atomic bombs will be capable of killing a third or a half of the people of a great nation, and demolishing an even higher percentage of its productive capacity." (*Saturday Evening Post*, July 13, 1946.) With such destructive possibilities of atom-bomb warfare on the horizon, there must naturally be "a heavy premium upon striking the first blow," and the President of the U.S.A. will not have time to call a meeting of the American Congress to decide whether the country should enter the war or not. He will have to be given full powers to declare war when need arises. To prevent attack, the Government will have to construct a chain of rocket installations throughout the country. These installations will function on 24-hour alert, and the rocket-controller and his deputies will have on them the responsibility of combating the hostile rockets. These men will, then, issue fatal orders before the President can give his assent, raining destruction and death on nation upon nation throughout the world. Thus, power will shift from the national executive to a scientist, whose error of judgment may destroy half the human race. If America is herself to survive, she must recast her urban pattern. Cities must be decentralized, industry must be scattered and made mobile for quick transportation into the interior; new, long, narrow ribbon-towns will have to be built to minimize the destructive blow of the bomb. These and many more changes will need to be introduced by the people of the United States if they are to survive in this age of atom-bomb, which they were the first to unleash. With sixty per cent. of her population living in cities, she is the most vulnerable nation in the whole world.



tin-can. Similarly, the Middle Ages and Renaissance were given an exit by industrialism.

### **What affects a part affects the whole**

Now, there is one aspect common to all these cultural changes that needs to be emphasised, and it is this : when a change takes place in one segment of social life, as a result of impact from another culture, the whole life of the group is affected. A new accommodation has to be found between various segments of social life, between education, industry, arts, government, religion, law, morals, schemes of values and ideals. Even the biological organism must register the impact of these changes and adapt itself appropriately. An all-inclusive change is inevitable. The pace of change will vary according to the processes of communication, the intensity of the impact and the mechanism of social control. The dynamic nature of social life is in constant search for equilibrium of forces operating within it or else there will be an explosion. The principal fact to remember is the organic inter-relationship of the various parts of a culture. What affects a part affects the whole. Ignorance of these simple facts of cultural change have landed many a country and its leaders into social and political policies and programmes which have proved to be extremely wasteful of time, energy, enthusiasm and even life and resources. More of this anon.

### **The western culture of machine and science**

India has come face to face with the technological

culture of the West, and a brief outline of this culture is quite appropriate here.

### **Economic life**

In the realm of economics, the West has developed the ideology of poverty amidst plenty, concentration of capital, large commercial combines, cartels, trusts, laws of supply and demand and ever accumulating profits, gold-backed currencies, credits, stock markets, tariffs, quotas, exchange depreciations, price stabilizations, monopolies control and clearing arrangements, imperial preferences, bilateral trade agreements, trade cycles, depressions, crashes and slumps, glutted markets, irregular employment, labour unrest, autarchy or economic nationalism, and finally the tragedy of national planning ending in international chaos.

### **Politics**

These have given birth, in the realm of politics, to arrogant, assertive nationalism, a false idea of state sovereignty, a decadent parliamentarism, written constitutions guaranteeing easily-abrogated liberties, a social philosophy of rights and privileges. Democracy and dictatorship are the twin-children of science and machine. Fascism, Nazism and Communism are all cast in the same mould, and they all insist on subordination of the individual to the state. Parties, with their professions of lobbying and jobbery, thrive everywhere. Imperialism, based on ruthless exploitation of the backward races, is the present heritage of mankind. Racial hatred was no monopoly

of Nazi countries ; it prevails in the imperialistic countries and their colonies against the coloured peoples. It is a part of the general picture.

### **Education**

Education in the West is permeated by a pragmatic philosophy of vocational training, fostered by the economic and political institutions of the countries. Commercialism has taken a grip of their educational systems ; cultural and humanistic subjects have been confronted with extinction. Education has become an agency of propaganda, a hammer in the hands of the capitalistic, imperialistic or dictatorial parties. A sordid parochialism has invaded the educational institutions of the western countries, and science itself has been prostituted to serve the interests of the predominant group, to feed the flame of national and racial prejudices. Intricate and invisible scientific mechanisms are used to convert thinking human beings into articulate animals, shouting slogans and shibboleths, with their mental integrity utterly dissolved, so that they are easily drilled to destroy or die. Education of little children is designed to prepare them to follow in the footsteps of their fathers. Thinkers and scientists are forced to buy their security by selling their conscience and submitting themselves as bond slaves to the powers that be.

### **Social institutions**

Some of the time-honoured social institutions that man has evolved with considerable toil have also

come under the impact of science and machine. Marriage in the highly industrialized West, has become a matter of convenience, a biological necessity, not a partnership of spiritual adventure. Use of contraceptives has increased ; the size of the family has decreased. Feminism has driven a wedge into the family and the institution is in the course of dissolution. Conscriptio of woman came in the last war ; the state care of children will be the next step. Megalopolitan cities, creations of science and machine, are replacing rural regions, and they depersonalize man, reducing him to the status of a "lost soul," even amidst crowds. The cities are the dug-outs of crime, of prostitution-rings, dope-rings, gambling dens, coin-counterfeiters and gangsters. A sordid sensualism takes a grip of people living in these urbanized areas of the West.

### Arts

The arts have not escaped a similar fate ; they are dominated by the bizarre, the unintelligible, the fantastic. Cubists, futurists and surrealists vie with each other in their irrationalism. The chaotic tendencies of the age are reflected in their work ; they seek a return to the primitive. Entertainments have become commercialized, debased. They exploit the primitive urges of man ; they expose and vulgarize his sacred emotions. Man's physical and mental health has deteriorated. The incidence of various diseases of body and mind in a mechanical milieu is very high. Most of the literature produced in recent years is either erotic or neurotic. The age of the great writers who immortalized and idealized

man's inner, spiritual hungers, his sacred hopes and aspirations, has passed away, yielding place to the rebellious scribe of the criminal and the sensational. Current literary criticism has no philosophy, no scheme of values.

### **Religion**

Religion has also been forced to face some interrogations. Freudian psycho-analysis and mechanistic behaviourism are considered to be the keys with which to unlock the mysteries of the human mind. Dialectical materialism and Darwinism, the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, are the main planks of modern religion. That is why we witness the ungodly spectacles of blessings given to battle-ships and Deans holding stocks in armament factories ! Some nations have officially abolished Christianity ; Nazi Germany had taken to the worship of her ancient primitive gods, Wotan and Thor.

### **Keynote of modern culture: Conflict**

This, then, is the picture of Western culture to-day. The key-note of this culture is conflict, antithesis, *adharma* ; conflict between nature and man, between man and woman, between capital and labour, between class and class, between the country and the city, between individual and state, between nation and nation, between life and form. The recent armageddon, unparalleled in intensity of destruction and extensiveness of operations in the history of mankind, was the logical climax of this conflict.

**India : Two cultures in conflict**

Now, two types of cultures, with vastly differently ideologies and values, have come face to face in India and are engaged in a deadly combat. India, with her rural, agricultural, handicraft culture, with a moneyless economy and village communism, with its social and political democracy through harmonious relations among the various groups, with an integrated view of life and education, with emphasis on indefinable, qualitative values, on a subjective, broad-based nationalism and on man and the machinery of the government, with a life of religious experience and spiritual freedom for the individual through general human welfare, with emphasis on power through repose, is confronted by a culture that stands for science, machine and mass production, for an urbanized, industrialized order, for analytical view of life with its emphasis on neuroses and complexes, for quantitative values and monetary economy, for struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, for accumulation of wealth and economic imperialism, for assertive, arrogant nationalism, for religion of scientific humanism and rationalism. India has sought the Vision of the Whole, not of the parts ; she has been interested in Life, not merely in the means of livelihood. She has combined philosophic calm and contemplation with dynamic action ; she has stood for beauty and dignity, combined with utility. But to-day, the culture of science and machine has taken a firm grip of India and is slowly seeping into her soul.

**Difference between political and cultural conflicts**

It is well to pause here for a moment and take note of the distinction between political and cultural types of conflict. Political conflict between two groups or nations may culminate into open hostilities, which are abrupt and obvious, while conflict between their cultures is slow and subtle. Britain conquered India, Japan occupied parts of China, Germany built a rampart round Europe by actual warfare ; this type of conflict may last anywhere from a day to decades or even centuries. In this type of conflict, the issues are settled by force of arms. But a conflict between two culture-patterns is spread over a long period of time, is slow and subtle, and there is no use of force. The Hawaiians took to the Christian mode of dressing without compulsion ; the Alaskans accepted the kerosene lamp because it was easy to light and carry ; while the Americans suffered a drastic change in their domestic economy owing to the challenge of a tin-can. No use of force was involved in any of these instances. The process of cultural change was unconscious, unpredicted, slow. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility of conscious acceptance of a cultural change, with eyes wide open. Japan and Turkey accepted an all-inclusive transformation of their lives in this manner. There was no compulsion or force of arms from outside. In both cases, the change was spread over some years.

Thus, the relationship between political and cultural conflicts is indirect. To be sure, the political conquest of a group aids the victor in effecting cultural conquest.

The European conquerors in Asia and Africa have always sought to secure both types of conquest ; the political has been invariably followed by the cultural. The conquerors carried their educational, social, political, economic and religious institutions to their subject races. Thus, the political conquest became a part of the larger one, which was the cultural conquest. The former rests on flimsy foundations if it is not accompanied by the latter. The inscription on Lord Lawrence's statue in Lahore is badly worded. It should have been : " We have conquered you with the sword. Now, we shall conquer you with a pen." Macaulay was shrewd enough to have realized this when he wrote that the purpose of English education in India should be to produce Englishmen in every respect excepting the colour of their skins ! He was aiming at India's cultural conquest. India's political conquest was completed with the crushing of her last bid for freedom in 1857 and with the crowning of Queen Victoria as India's Empress ; but the cultural conquest of India by the technological culture of the West is still going on and bids fair to gather momentum with the passage of time.

It is important to remember that a free country can accept alien modes of life and thought to subserve the interests of its citizens and promote their general welfare. Japan, Turkey, and Russia accepted the technological culture of the West and rose to be great powers within a short time. But the situation is different in the case of a conquered country. Everything that the ruler says and does comes to



assume an air of sanctity and finality ; his word is law, his social institutions are superior, his customs and traditions beyond question. Thus, the dice are heavily loaded against the subjugated nation, its culture is on self-defence and is in danger of being supplanted by that of the ruler. The political and the cultural conquests reinforce each other and hold the soul of the subject nation in thrall. India is a case in point.

### **Beginnings of conflict**

The conflict of cultures in India began with the advent of the processes and products of the western culture of machine and science. Ship, railway and telegraph were its earliest agents ; subsequent inventions added telephone, wireless, radio, cinema, newspaper and literature to the list. The rapid means of locomotion provided facilities for travel, and there has been a continuous expansion of the two-way traffic between India and the world. The ruling race exported its businessmen, officials, doctors, lawyers, soldiers, missionaries and teachers in ever increasing numbers, while the youth of India went abroad for purposes of education and came back with new ideas. Now, each of these agents of cultural change reinforced the other, though each was, by itself, adequate to set in motion an all-inclusive change, as did the tin-can in the United States of America.

### **Railways and the cultural change**

The steel-tracks of the railway, for instance, cut across the country, disrupted the agrarian configura-

tion, caused considerable amount of water-logging, which, in turn gave birth to various diseases. The railway scattered throughout the country machine-made goods from the industrialized west, crushed out many indigenous industries, reduced the peasant-proprietor and the craftsman to a mere wage-earner. The railway served to knit the various parts of the country into an organic whole and affected the social attitudes and organization of the people. It struck a death blow at the caste system. All castes, high and low, began rubbing shoulders at the railway station and in the train. The process of communication, which is the heart and soul of all social and cultural change, became accelerated, and the distance between the various communities and castes, maintained artificially by tradition and custom, began to take wing. The railway forced the static society of India to accept the challenge. The caste system began to run away on the wheels of the railway. Thus, the railway alone might be said to have ended India's cultural isolation, affected her modes of travel, agricultural setting, industries, health, social life and thought. It ushered in an era of conflict of cultures. But all the agents of the western culture, mentioned above, reinforced each other and offered a most formidable challenge to India's cultural ethos.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If Gandhiji had been cognisant of these laws of social and cultural change, he would have clamoured for more machinery, more railways and better roads rather than wasted his time and energy on appealing to the higher castes by word of mouth "to give up the curse of untouchability." The demands of human life are more imperious than the word of an individual, however august he may be.

## I

**Disturbance of ecological balance**

We are now in a position to undertake a survey of the points of conflict between the two cultures in India, and the first thing that strikes us forcibly is the increasing disharmony between nature, animal and man. Once India had made a nodding acquaintance with the culture of machine and science of the West, she began to be "opened up." The pace of exploitation of natural resources was speeded up enormously, and it is going faster now. Apart from the "shaking of the pagoda tree," which was the tribute levied by the conqueror, the whole of the Indian economy became geared up to that of the ruler, and he made no secret of it. As early as 1877, Sir John Strachey, the Finance Member of the Government of India, said quite bluntly that in his judgment there was no duty higher than the one he owed to his country, which was subordination of India's interests to those of his ! The interests of his country demanded exploitation of India's natural resources for feeding the gaping jaws of the machine in his homeland, and this exploitation has gone on in an ever-increasing measure since then.

The immediate effect of emergence of machine and science in the West was that nature, animal and man were set in conflict with each other.<sup>1</sup> India had a

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion of this subject, see the author's *Science and Society in India : Foundations of National Planning*, Hind Kitabs, Bombay, 1945.

more or less balanced adjustment between the three agents before the advent of machine and science. But now all her resources became subjected to a severe strain and the whole of her ecology underwent a rapid transformation. Indian industries were systematically crushed by the rulers and India became one vast plantation for their purposes. Famines stalked the land and took away millions. All the natural resources came in for intense exploitation. Man dug deep into the bowels of the earth to rob it of its natural resources, broke up the surface by deforestation and heavy grazing of the cattle and exhausted its reserve strength to feed his rapidly rising numbers. The three interdependent units of human ecology became engaged in a mutually destructive combat as a result of this impact of technology from the West.

### **Strain on natural resources**

The mineral resources have been increasingly exploited. The production of coal, for instance, which was only 13 lakh tons in 1884, had risen to 238 lakh tons in 1938. It is likely that it has doubled during the war years. It is true that this is but a fraction of the 6,000 crore tons that are supposed to be India's total reserves, but the increase indicates the rapidly rising rate of exploitation. Beginning with a modest 95 lakh gallons of petroleum, the production has shot up to 870 lakh gallons by 1938. The iron ore, which was 9 lakh tons in 1921, had reached in the neighbourhood of thirty lakh tons in the same period. The production of manganese has remained more or

less steady between  $6\frac{1}{2}$  to 7 lakh tons, but it was mostly exported and at half the world-market prices. Mica tells the same story. India's 6,000 tons per year represent 80 per cent. of the world's output, but it was sold abroad. Silver shot up from a little over a quarter million to six million ounces, zinc from 8,500 to 77,000 ounces. Tin concentrates showed the modest figure of 5,400 cwts. in 1914 ; in 1935, they rose to 1.18 lakh cwts. The rate of exploitation of mineral resources during the last war was considerably accelerated. India's natural resources became a global concern ; the tempo of their consumption for purposes of destruction gathered unprecedented momentum.<sup>1</sup>

But the surface of the earth has been subjected to no less a strain. The problem of having to feed the rapidly rising populations of animal and man has robbed the earth of its reserve strength. Millions of acres of virgin soil have been brought under the plough in recent years ; we do not know how many have gone out of use owing to exhaustion. The increase in the acreage under cultivation will be evident from the following figures :

				1920-21	1940-41
				<i>Acres</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Rice	...	...	...	67,732,000	68,701,000
Wheat	...	...	...	21,795,000	26,450,000
Jowar, bajra, etc.	...	...	...	39,946,000	41,045,000

<sup>1</sup> The Government of India has seen the wisdom of conserving some of our natural resources and appointed a Coal Conservation Board, February, 1946. What we really need is Board for conservation of all the natural resources of our country.

Groundnuts	...	...	1,824,000	5,914,000
Other oilseeds	...	...	9,324,000	9,716,000
Jute	...	...	1,505,000	2,076,000
Coffee	...	...	57,000	85,000
Sugarcane	...	...	2,543,000	4,402,000

These figures deal only with the British India ; there was a corresponding rise in acreage under cultivation in the State. All the land under cultivation in 1901-02 was 18.7 crore acres. It shot up to 21.6 crore in 1936-37 and went down to 21.4 in 1940-41.

The area under groundnut cultivation has quadrupled during the period under review, but most of the produce was exported, while the people famished for want of proteins and fats ! Nor should we forget that the non-food crops take up the best soil for production, relegating the food grains to inferior soil, thus subjecting it to exhaustion and steady deterioration, depriving the nation of its developing industries.

### **Destruction of forests**

India's forests have been victims of destruction. Demands of steadily expanding industrialization, development of railways that require timber for tracks and steam-power, of the rising populations of human beings and animals, have laid a heavy toll on India's forest reserves. Their destruction must affect adversely the humidity of the air, evaporation and precipitation of moisture, the river floods, the fertility of the soil and the health of the people. Even an alien government realized the tragic consequences of rapid deforestation and took steps to stop the

destruction, but the last war pushed the pendulum in the other direction once again.<sup>1</sup>

### **Animal versus man**

To this conflict pattern, man allows the animals to add their quota by allowing them to procreate indiscriminately. Out of a total population of 54 crores in the world, India has 18 crores to look after. This makes 67 head of cattle per acre, while Egypt has 25, Holland 38, China 15 and Japan only 6. This superabundance of numbers does not necessarily contribute to the well-being of man. Seventy per cent. of the cows and buffaloes are dry and the remainder give a negligible quantity of milk. They aggravate deforestation and erosion of the soil by heavy grazing and hoofing, aid in perpetuation of primitive methods of agriculture and transportation. When out of proportion with natural resources and human requirements, the animal enters the arena of conflict and contributes its share to the general breakdown of ecological balance.

### **“Standing room only”**

The third agent in this conflict is man himself. Having forgotten the ancient tradition of control of numbers through various mechanisms, and as a result of impact of technology, our numbers have kept rising steadily. India offers its children, as Professor

<sup>1</sup> The above sentences were written from an elevation of 6,000 feet in the Nilgiri Hills in South India, and one could see the destruction roundabout. The hills are fast becoming bare and the good earth is flowing down, leaving the hills to stand stark naked. A fine dust blows about when there is no rain.

E. A. Ross puts it, "standing room only," and she is, according to Professor Thompson, "a danger spot in world population." The population is said to have stood at 10 crores at the time of Akbar, at 25.4 crores in 1880, 33.8 crores in 1931, and 38.9 crores in 1941. Thus, during the 1931-1941 decade, the increase in the population of the country was more than the combined population of England and Wales. The numbers continue to rise. In another twenty-five years, India will have 10 more crores, if we judge by the age-group composition of the population, and some students of the population problem are afraid that the population may be twice its present size by the time we turn the corner of the present century. The birth and death rates are high. The Census Report of 1941 puts the figures at 32 and 22 per thousand respectively, but it is a well-known fact that there is a discrepancy of at least 33 per cent. The infant mortality is frightful. It was 198 per thousand in 1921, it came down to 166 per thousand in 1941. One can see the appalling wastage of human life in this country if he bears in mind the fact that with these high birth and death rates, India still added 8 crores to its numbers between 1921 and 1941 (3.06 to 3.89 crores respectively). In India, the fecundity, the *potential* creative power of the woman without any restriction, is not known, but her fertility, the *actual* creativeness is poor. According to Professor Carr Saunders, of London University, "In India the average number of children born to women is not large. The census of 1931 gives the results of a special inquiry of 900,000



families scattered among all classes and all parts of India. The conclusion derived from an analysis of the returns is that the average married woman in India has four children born alive and that 2.9 in every four, 70 per cent. that is, survive. The relatively small number of children is not due to birth control or to postponement of marriage, since all women marry early. The explanation is in part that many women die before they reach the end of the productive period." The reproductive faculty in men and women is considerably impaired by malnutrition and disease. Some American experts maintain that it requires 1.2 acres per capita to produce emergency diet in their country. In India, the net area under food crops per capita is .72 acre. The ratio between increase in population and the total area under cultivation is extremely uneven. Between 1911 and 1934, there was 22 per cent. increase in population and only 6 per cent. in area under food crop cultivation ! All the land capable of cultivation has been taken. The plough has invaded the meadow and the marsh ; in not a few provinces, the actual land under cultivation has actually gone down.

### **Biological and mental degeneracy**

The height and weight of the population must go down under such circumstances, as can be judged by comparison with conditions in the post-war Germany of 1918 and also of 1945. The average expectancy of life in India is very low. Norway, Holland, Germany, Switzerland and the

British Isles have life expectancy of 55 years. In New Zealand, it has reached 62 years. In India, it is actually going down. It was 30 years in 1880 ; it is 26 years to-day. In India, 35 children out of 100 attain the age of thirty, while the corresponding figures for Japan are 65, France 68, Germany 66, United Kingdom 75 and Sweden 76 ! The physical and mental degeneracy of the nation is literally galloping. The Malthusian hypothesis that population increases by geometrical progression while food production increases by arithmetical progression is still valid in India. All our heroics of "Grow More Food Campaign," "Baby Welfare Weeks," etc., have a touch of the comical, if not inhuman, in them. As Sir John Megaw, the late Director-General, Indian Medical Services, wrote : "There is every reason to believe that the maximum increase which can be hoped for the production of necessities of life will not keep pace with the growth of the population, so that there is a prospect of steady deterioration in the state of nutrition of the people."

### **Cessation of emigration**

The emigration of working classes overseas, which was not very large already, has come to a standstill. South Africa shut its doors against India some years ago ; it is now discussing repatriation of all the Indians so that they (the South Africans) can live in comfort. Canada and Australia, lands of vast spaces, are eager to have emigrants from Europe, but they will not tolerate Indians in their midst. Malaya and Burma were hostile to Indians before they went under

the flag of the Rising Sun ; the Union Jack will not make them change their minds. Ceylon does not have much love for Indians ; the Government has launched forth on squeezing out the businessmen and throwing out the "coolies." The planters want Indian "coolies," they cannot do without them, since the native labourer is lazy, intemperate, unclean and has no sense of duty and responsibility.

Large-scale industrialization will not absorb great numbers of workers. There were only fifteen lakhs of workers in large-scale industries in 1901 ; in 1931, the number had increased to only 35 lakhs. Industrialization adds to the numbers, puts great pressure on land and aggravates the unbalance between the land, animal and man. India is going through the same experience as the western nations did on emergence of industrialism. If the six hundred medical colleges, recommended by the Post-War Health Development Committee of the Government of India, come into existence and, along with other health measures cut down the death rate, there will not only be no "standing room," but not even breathing space in the country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author's remarks, written in 1940, are pertinent. He wrote : "It is against the background of these facts that the problem of population should be studied in India. Mahatma Gandhi's view that the country can support twice the present population if its resources are properly developed, must be considered in the light of the above facts. If we accept his view, some of the following things *must* happen : since all the cultivable land has been taken up for agriculture and there are no prospects of increasing the yield per acre, our millions will continue to be undernourished. Infant and maternal mortalities will continue to rise. Life expectancy will go down further. Diseases will claim heavier tolls, since the power of resistance will be at a lower ebb. Standard of living will fall ; the struggle for existence will become keener. Social evils will raise their heads ; crime

## II

**Village economy in ruins**

The village, which has been the basic unit of Indian culture, has come under the impact of the new culture from the West. The self-sufficiency of the village has disappeared, and it has become linked up with the city, the nation and the world. The fluctuations in prices in world markets affect the destinies of the millions of mute and helpless farmers. Money, which was rare even for purposes of remunerating services or effecting exchange, has appeared on the scene. The old system of barter, moneyless economy, which ensured security and freedom from want for all the members of the community, has been supplanted by an economy in which money came to be the standard of value. The demands of exchange with the outside world, payment of revenues, wages, rents, interest on loans, etc., ushered money economy. The rooting of the farmer to the soil and of the craftsman to his hereditary profession engendered a sense of social solidarity and group unity. But this has also disappeared, rendering the village population mobile, rootless, shiftless. The family and the caste no longer exercise control over the individual, who

is already on the increase. The land is bound to protest against this additional burden. India will be faced with land-erosions, dust-storms and famines. Till that time comes, there may be an explosion somewhere. Revolution is not an impossibility under such circumstances. Numbers are known to have destroyed civilizations." *Medical Digest*, Bombay, Vol. 8, No. 4, April, 1940. Since this was written, the author's fatal prophecies have come to pass. All that remains to be fulfilled is an open revolution and that too, is not far off.

has become depersonalized. Village industries disappeared with the first touch of the machine products. Cheap Manchester fabrics and prints ousted the village weaver, and now Manchester itself has been ousted by the Indian Manchesters of Ahmedabad, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. Village sugar industry was crushed out by imported sugar ; that, in its turn, is replaced by indigenous sugar industry, with enormous capital invested in it. The petroleum replaced oil from the hand-press of the village. Village pottery and brass-ware yielded their place to aluminium and enamelled iron-ware of local and foreign makes. Every industry of the village has been affected.

The transformation of agriculture followed in the wake of these changes. It became commercialized. With an ever-increasing subdivision and fragmentation of land, the dispossessed farmer became a serf and land went into the hands of the money-lender and the non-agricultural class. There began a general exodus to the cities. Mechanization and consolidation of land can alone bring salvation to the derelict agriculture.

### **Custom and status versus competition**

The stability of social organization was so far maintained by custom and status ; they kept under control individualism and exploitation that are the chief characteristics of the culture of machine. Formerly, custom and status regulated prices, wages, rents and land taxes. But now free competition has entered, replaced custom and status, torn up

the villager from his family, caste and professional moorings and made him a physical and psychological nomad. The corporate life has been considerably weakened. In vain did Ranade complain against the invasion of the new economic forces. The rulers could not have stopped them, with the best of the will in the world. Ranade wrote : " As these assumptions (such as enlightened individualism, free competition, mobility of labour, etc.) do not absolutely hold good of even the most advanced societies, it is obvious that in societies like ours, they are chiefly conspicuous by their absence. With us an average individual man is, to a large extent, the very antipodes of the economical man. The family and the caste are more powerful than the individual in determining his position in life. Self interest in the shape of desire for wealth is not absent, but is not the only nor principal motor. The pursuit of wealth is not the only ideal aimed at. There is neither the desire nor the aptitude for free unlimited competition except within certain predetermined grooves or groups. Custom and state regulation are far more powerful than competition, and status more decisive in its influence than contract. Neither capital nor labour is mobile, and enterprising and intelligent enough to shift from place to place. Wages and profits are fixed, and not elastic and responsive to change of circumstances. Population follows its own law, being cut down by disease and famine, while production is almost stationary, the bumper harvest of one year being needed to provide against the uncertainties of alternate bad seasons. In a society so constituted,

the tendencies assumed as axiomatic, are not only inoperative, but are actually deflected from their proper direction. You might as well talk of the tendency of mountains to be washed away into the sea, or of the valleys to fill up, or of the sun to get cold, as reasons for our practical conduct within a measurable distance of time.”<sup>1</sup> And yet he did not detect his own inconsistency when he wrote in the same book: “The great Indian dependency of England has during this (nineteenth) century come to supply the place of old colonies. This dependency has come to be regarded as a plantation, growing raw produce to be shipped by the British agents in British ships, to be worked into manufactured articles by British skill and capital, and to be re-exported to this country by British merchants to their corresponding British firms in India and elsewhere. The development of the steam-power and mechanical skill joined with increased facilities of communication, have but lent strength to this tendency of the times, and as one result of the change, the gradual ruralization of this great dependency, and rapid decadence of native manufacturing trade become distinctly marked.”<sup>2</sup> Ranade did not see this self-contradiction, as he kept economic and social changes in water-tight compartments. The two act and interact on each other. The process of social disorganization is *in excelsis* now and will play havoc with our national culture if it not properly controlled and adapted to India’s requirements and world conditions.

<sup>1</sup> Ranade, *Essays on Indian Economics*, 2nd Edition, pp. 10-11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 106-107.

### III

#### **Economic disorganization**

It is in the economic department of life that we see the conflict of cultures at its worst. With the disappearance of the rural economy, the voluntary, co-operative communism has given place to indigenous capitalism, and India is broken up into two camps, arrayed against each other, capital and labour. Look where we will, we meet this problem in one form or another. The big landlord, the zamindar, the petty rajah, the industrialist or the capitalist on one side, and the hari, the kisan, the peasant, the jat, the wage-earner on the other. Strikes, lock-outs, sabotages are as common as in the industrialized West. Conflict, not co-operation, is the pattern of our economic life to-day. Foreign capitalist came to India as an ally of the ruler, and both together exploited the masses for two centuries. Now, both are preparing to depart, while the Indian capitalist has already occupied positions of power in our national economy.

#### **Empire of capitalism**

Two young journalists have portrayed the picture of the rising empire of capitalism in a vivid manner and their statement deserves quotation in full. They write :

“His (Jawaharlal Nehru's) arrest and detention brought no tears to the eyes of the Men of Money. For on August 9, 1942, Indian capitalism was in a state of prosperity and exhilaration. Thanks to the



war situation, there was a boom in industrial and commercial activity. The profits were enormous and were being shrewdly invested in newer industrial enterprises and through accumulation, consolidation and expansion of capital, Indian capitalism was steadily moving towards monopoly capitalism of the western type. The mills and factories were working overtime to fulfil huge war contracts for Government departments, and in spite of the houses and increased wages grudgingly given to Labour, a rich harvest of dividends was being reaped. No longer was the representative Indian capitalist a *Seth* in a *pedhi*, owning one textile mill or an insurance company. Now, like an American tycoon, he controlled directly or indirectly a dozen or even more industries. He sat in an air-conditioned office, an emperor of the new age, ruling the markets, manipulating prices, with tens of thousands of wage-earners working in his mills and factories, and millions of consumers depending upon his sweet will for their economic needs.

#### **"Birlas"**

"Since August 1942, the process of investing the Indian capitalist with greater economic—and consequently political—power has gone steadily apace. Before us lie two full-page advertisements in a Bombay political weekly which tells their own story. The first declares that Birla Brothers are the Managing Agents for Kesoram Cotton Mills Ltd., Birla Cotton Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd., Birla Cloth Mills Ltd., Sotlej Cotton Mills Ltd., Birla Cotton Factory Ltd., Jyajeerao Cotton Mills Ltd., Gwalior, New

Asiatic Life Insurance Co., Ltd., Ruby General Insurance Co., Ltd., Orient Paper Mills Ltd., Birla Jute Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Hind Cycles Ltd., Indian Shipping Co., Ltd., Premier Stores Supply Co., Ltd., and Textile Machinery Corporation Ltd. This vast industrial empire extends over several provinces and states. And it has only to be added that one of these Birla Brothers is Ghanshyamdas Birla who owns the *Hindusthan Times*, the most influential nationalist paper in the North India, as well as the *Eastern Economist* a sedate-looking financial weekly which serves as a veritable house organ for Birla Brothers, Ltd. Recently he is reported to have acquired the *Searchlight* of Patna, the *Leader* of Allahabad.<sup>1</sup> (Of course, it would be imprudent to advertise these four concerns along with the fourteen listed above !)

### “Thapars”

“The other advertisement informs us that Karam Chand Thapar Bros., Ltd., are the Managing Agents of Oriental Coal Co., Ltd. (Regonia and Badjana Colliers), Real Jambad Coal Co., Ltd. (Real Jambad Colliery), Poniaty Collieries Ltd. (Poniaty Colliery), Eastern Syndicate Ltd. (West and New Badjana Collieries), Rawanwara Collieries Ltd. (Rawanwara Khas Colliery), Madhuband Colliery, Kasta and Bihar Collieries Ltd. (Korabad, Borkuri and Pariapur Collieries), Bharat Starch and Chemicals Ltd., Shree Sitaram Sugar Co., Ltd., Deoria Sugar Mills Ltd.,

<sup>1</sup> Since then, the Dalmias have purchased the *Times of India*, of Bombay.

Unao Distilleries Ltd. (manufacturing liquor), Shree Gopal Paper Mills, Oriental Commercial Co., Ltd., The National Security Assurance Co., Ltd., The Mahabir Insurance Co., Ltd., Chief Agency of Norwich Union Fire Insurance Co. of India, Ltd., Dry Ice and Refrigerators Ltd. We are further informed that the Managing Director of all this commercial network is Lala Karam Chand Thapar and that the telegraphic address of the head office of this highly materialistic empire is 'SPIRITUAL.' Lala Karam Chand Thapar, one is led to conclude, is a humorist with a strongly-developed sense of irony !

#### "Tatas"

"Does one want more examples of the alarming concentration of economic power ? One has only to go round the corner to Bombay House, the headquarters of the House of Tatas, presided over by the youthful-looking J. R. D. Tata.

"A glance of the signboards in the halls would be enough. A Tata advertisement informs us that the total capital investment of the company is 71 crores, employees are 109,000, wage and salary bill is six crores per annum, and that it owns and controls, besides the famous Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur, the Tata Air Lines, Tata Textile Mills, Hydro-Electric Power Generators, Tata Chemicals, Oil Mills, Soap Factories—and the Taj Mahal Hotel !

"So much about economic power. What about political influence ? Some of them are already in control of important political journals with wide circulation and there is a feverish move on the part

of others to acquire some more. With the idea of trying to appear nationalistic and using their money to gain power in a future free India, capitalists have gone out of their way to pay lip-sympathy to the Congress and subscribe to funds and to place their bungalows at the disposal of the Congress executive. We are not naïve enough to believe that such hospitality confers no indirect advantages on them. Considering the fact that the slightest indisposition of Gandhiji or of any important Congress leader, or the merest whisper of a political move on their part, is enough to unsettle the stock market, surely a Big Business family would give anything to have India's national leaders with them."

These are the usual ways of extending the capitalistic empire: pretending patriotism but pocketing large profits, buying and controlling public opinion at its source, offering spacious hospitality to political leaders, and building temples, schools and colleges. Let us go into this subject a little more. The authors continue:

"And can the head of a capitalistic organization wish anything better than to have in his employment a former Socialist leader like M. R. Masani who can write and publish pamphlets on Socialism which uphold the 'doctrine of trusteeship of the owners of property' as against Nehru's advocacy of the nationalization of industry?<sup>1</sup> Compared with the profits of 1940, the profits of the Textile Industry

<sup>1</sup> Other capitalists have not lagged behind; they have in their employ some eminent economists and scholars to uphold their empires of power and control.

have increased fifteen-fold and twenty-fold. Yet these 'convenient sympathisers' of the Congress have not hesitated, with the connivance of the government, to raise the bogey of a cloth famine, to hoard vast stocks of cloth, and to fleece the people by prices which were exorbitantly high, compared even with the prices of other goods which shot up because of real scarcity. For as the profits of the millowners grew, the Excess Profits Tax mulcted by the Government increased, so that when the millowners got lakhs, the Government got crores—at the expense of the already hard-pressed people.

“And the Textile Industry is only one instance among many. All industrialists have grabbed at their fattening shares of profits, and simultaneously played the tax-collector to the Government at the cost of the poor consumer.” These tactics of these financiers and industrialists have only helped to squeeze out the middle class and reduce him to penury. The present war must therefore sharpen the distinction between the haves and have-nots in India and this must intensify class war. The techniques adopted by these industrialists to hoodwink the public give us an idea of their sense of humour. They reconciled “their professions with their practice by doing what many Bombay mills did after August 1942 disturbances—by flying a national tricolour on the mills which were working day and night to fulfil Government war contracts ! Or by doing what many of the Ahmedabad mills did—closing down ostensibly as a protest *hartal*, when it was obviously in their interests to stop production and force up the prices

in the market ! In any case, no credit belongs to them for their ' patriotism. ' ”

### “ The Bombay Plan ”

In regard to the Bombay Plan, the authors write : “ The booklet which sets forth their joint prescription for India's ills begins with a patronizing reference to ‘ the National Planning Committee to whose labours the conception of a planned economy for India is largely due, ’ and then proceeds to offer a plan that is the very antithesis of Nehru's conception of national planning. Not only is there no reference to any possibility of limitations of profits, but the whole question of distribution of national wealth has been left untouched. While the Congress is pledged to nationalization of key industries and the National Planning Committee envisages the same process, the Tata-Birla Plan is conveniently vague on the question of ownership and control of industry. ”<sup>1</sup>

This is how the empire of capitalism is being firmly established in this country. The capitalists will align themselves with foreign capital, join international cartels and trusts, control the press, education, make use of the power of the government for their own ends, endow religious institutions, build temples, start social welfare work for show rather than service, dominate elections and have their henchmen in the representative bodies in the provinces and the centre, organize high pressure groups for lobbying and jobbery, offer spacious hospitality to

<sup>1</sup> Abbas, K. A., and Jog, N. G., *A Report to Gandhiji*, pp. 62-66, 1944.

political leaders and financial aid to the parties in power ! There is only one way to meet this challenge of capitalism, the offspring of the culture of machine and science, and that is abolition of capital itself, an utter extinction of money economy.<sup>1</sup> Without resorting to this extreme measure, the leaders of the country will find it impossible to move in the direction of building a new nation, whose citizens are well fed, clothed and sheltered. The biological, moral and spiritual decadence of the nation going apace so rapidly cannot be stopped by cold-blooded calculations of capitalists but by assuring every individual freedom from fear and want. India must move rapidly in this direction to save herself from being utterly vanquished by the alien culture of conflict ; the world forces leave her no choice in the matter.

## IV

### **The rise of labour**

Labour has also become conscious of its power and organized itself, though not on such an extensive scale as in the West. Trade Unions began to be effectively organised after the impact of the war of 1914-18 ; the war of 1939-45 has placed much greater power in the hands of labour. To-day, the labour of the major industries, such as steel, coal, mining, textiles, jute, railways, posts and telegraphs, shipping,

<sup>1</sup> Withdrawal of currency notes of Rs. 500 and above from circulation by the Government of India, when the hostilities ceased in 1946, helped to put a check on the nefarious activities of the black-marketeers and the would-be capitalists.

etc., has strong labour unions, capable of concerted action. The labour of the minor professions, such as tobacco, match-making, pottery, tailoring, hotels, restaurants, tram and bus-drivers, has also organized itself and become articulate. The peasant organizations such as the Kisans, the Khudai Khitmatgar, the Haris, the Jats, are also gathering strength; their organizations are still provincial in composition. But they will become effective if the present land laws continue to operate for any length of time.

India's economic life sizzles with strife. The major zone of conflict in the world to-day is the economic, not religious as was the case in the medieval ages. It is no longer Protestantism *versus* Catholicism, but wealth *versus* poverty, ownership of instruments and means of livelihood *versus* toolless, landless, low-paid labour. The nation and the state are moved by economic forces as much as by race and religion, as Weber, the German sociologist, pointed out many years ago.

## V

### Caste in dissolution

India's social organization has also been forced to face the challenge of machine and science. As already indicated, the caste system has begun to dissolve under the vitriolic touch of the new culture. Whatever the origins of the caste system, its contribution to social cohesiveness, economic efficiency, evolution of Indian nationality and synthesis of cultures and races



cannot be denied.<sup>1</sup> The members of the same caste guarded well the skill in industry or craft, while the hereditary principle facilitated transmission of that skill to the succeeding generations. The caste was based on division of labour, which insured efficiency and economic strength and promoted social integration. It aided in the welding together of the heterozygous population and in reconciling the claims of their conflicting cultures; it enabled the society to withstand the shocks of alien invasions as well as indigenous skirmishes and saved it from dissolution. The caste inducted the individual into the group life, and with the minimum expenditure of energy, transmitted to him the social heritage for his safe custody and enrichment. The functional castes, like the mediæval guilds of Europe, fostered *esprit de corps*, encouraged due recognition of mutual bonds of interdependence. But with the passage of time and as a result of human inertia, which led to negligence of those principles of adaptation that make for social progress, the *varna dharma* became a moulden mass of tradition, "a cake of custom," which defeated the very purpose of its having been called into being.

The culture of machine and science quickened the pace of communication between the various castes and parts of the country, and the age-old isolation has given place to a multiplicity of contacts, physical, emotional and mental. Railway, mill and factory

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of this subject, see the author's *Manu: A Study in Hindu Social Thought*; Ambedkar's *Who were the Shudras?*; Hutton's *The Caste in India*; S. V. Ketkar's *History of Caste in India*; G. S. Ghurya's *Caste and Race in India*.

drew workers from all castes ; vocation ceased to be an index of caste. Taboos on food and drink have become relaxed, while intermarriage has begun to be common among the different communities. We have only to scan the matrimonial advertisements in the metropolitan papers throughout the country. Western education, ideas of equality before law, political awakening and demand for communal rights have proved to be the animating principles of social change. There is now a rapid mobility, horizontal and vertical, that is, from one region and profession to another and along the sliding scale of social hierarchy. The culture of machine and science has begun to liquidate the caste system.

### **The atomic individual**

But this process of liberating the individual from the bonds of corporate existence of the family, village, profession, and caste has not given birth to any other *collective representation* to which he can surrender his whole-hearted allegiance. The 'liberated' individual lives in a no-man's land ; he has no scheme of values and belongs to no group.

### **Break-up of the joint family**

The joint family is breaking up, as it broke up in Europe with the advent of industrial revolution. With the rural life uprooted, the land-man ratio upset, the craftsman robbed of his tools and trade, the cityward migration has become accelerated and the joint family system is giving way. The joint family gave a safe asylum to the unfortunate members

of the family, the widows and the orphans ; it taught unselfishness to the able-bodied and the more fortunate members, and thus made superfluous the modern types of philanthropy and social security legislation, pensions, poor relief, etc. It ensured collective security, with a minimum expenditure of energy and resources. The joint family fostered virtues of obedience and respect for elders, love for equals, kindness to the young, and self-sacrifice for all. But science and machine have levelled their attack against the joint family and its day seems to be done.

Modern facilities of transportation take the rootless and rudderless to the cities, and the spirit of adventure and enterprise holds out a promise of a better future. Loss of family occupation disbands the family and scatters the members around. With this disappears the sense of unity ; assertive individualism, bent upon personal, isolated success at any cost, takes its place. The domestic felicity and contentment give way to constant bickerings over unessentials and trivialities. The process of disintegration of the family is going apace rapidly. The life of the masses in rural areas is empty, joyless, and without hope !

### **The “liberated” woman**

But the institution of family in the city does not seem to fare any better. Science and machine, in their uncontrolled state, are no friends of the family institution. They have dealt sledge-hammer blows to the sanctity of marriage and family wherever they have made their appearance. Divorce and abortion have soon followed, and woman has clamoured for

rights. The modern movie, a contraction of machine and science, takes a hand in the game and puts virtue on the defence. Under such circumstances, the urbanized woman is born. She is superficial and sophisticated. She is more conscious of her appearance than of the contents of her mind. Glamour so graphically depicted on the scene and the seductive arts so well portrayed on the stage must mean a goodbye to modesty. An urbanized woman is a "lady of leisure," she can discuss the latest movie and that very superficially, the races and the dance. She is an expert in sampling the different types of cuisine but can't cook a dish; she knows how to flaunt the contours of her figure with a suggestive draping of the dress. She is more interested in the baby-car than in the baby. Her education is mediocre, her knowledge of problems of life superficial, while her facial make-up overdone. The modern, urbanized bourgeois woman of the mechanized milieu, is a psychic problem.

The woman of the poor class passes her days of dull, grey monotony in a slum, burdened with frequent motherhood. She may have to go to work amidst unhealthy conditions, so as to feed the growing number of mouths.

Family is the first primary group in the life of an individual; school and neighbourhood come later. In the family, he acquires a *locus atudi* and becomes a person. But when the bonds of corporate life in the family and other groups weaken, he becomes depersonalised. Social controls and values function no more; social diseases, fantastic experiments in

marriage, divorce, abortion appear. India is headed to have these in an increasing measure, rationalize them however we will !

## VI

### **Urbanization**

The city is a creation of the mechanized milieu. Our cities are growing in number and size ; they thrive at the cost of the village. Uncontrolled industry under the modern system must involve urbanization, crowding of large masses of population into small areas. The dispossessed villager, forced by famine and want of work, must migrate to the city. We have cities now that centralize industrial, financial, educational, governmental and transportation functions, as do the cities of the West. The population of Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Cawnpore, Delhi, Lahore, Sholapur and other cities has trebled in recent years. The machine has raised its mausoleums of coal, smoke, iron and steam, of dirt and squalor, of over-crowding, of coolie lines and human warehouses in our country. The mill centres, the engineering workshops, the leather factories, the jute mills, these and other specialized centres of industry are multiplying and there is a threat of their number increasing, with the rising tide of industrialization.

### **Barbarization and racial decay**

But urbanization is something more than herding of population in city slums. With urbanization are

associated prostitution rings, slums where warm, human flesh is on sale for enjoyment of man's animal passions, dope dealing, gambling dens, racing rackets, dance halls, cabarets and night clubs. The city means noise, which corrodes man's nerves; it means speed, with all accidents and loss of life. The city dweller lives his life second-hand, in a cinema, at the race course, in the workshop where he owns no tools and where he is only an economic hand. The city is a place of secondary contacts. People jostle with each other in crowds, but they live their lives of atomic existence and are strangers to each other. The rapidity with which a crowd will gather and be stampeded into violence shows the low level of intelligence and humanity at which the city dweller lives. Cities have no neighbourhoods. Children have no space for activity; they grow up as hoodlums and delinquents. The civic sense is at its lowest. The city governments are corrupt and inefficient; in India, they are rabidly communalistic in addition. The Indian cities are the focal points of the cultural assault from the West and they radiate putrefaction and disintegration of our national ethos. They draw the food produce and send back only the imported manufactured commodities. They suck the sturdy and healthy stock from the village, sterilise it into a race of weak, neurotic dregs, ready to be received by the grave and the funeral pyre. The urban vampirization of the village and sterilization of the race are obverse and reverse of the same coin, manifestation of one cultural pattern, conflict. The Indian sociologists of ancient times were fully aware

of these dangers, and they affirmed that one cannot gain *moksha* by living in a city, which was full of "dirt."

## VII

### Education and denationalization

Our education is another focal point for cultural assault from the West. Macaulay consigned all our literature, religious, philosophical, sociological, scientific, etc., to the waste-paper basket and gave India a system of education that has blunted our edge of discrimination and robbed us of the capacity of being Indians. He had one method of educating India, and that was denationalization of India's elite, breaking up their nationalistic pride and morale, treating them to the flesh-pots of western culture, and thus perpetuating the rule of the conquering race through such renegades. This system of education has gone on for the last two hundred years, so that even to-day we come across voices that appeal shamelessly for perpetuation of alien ideals in our country !

But this process of denationalization, of deliberate destruction of national ethos, has been further augmented by the rulers by a systematic policy of sucking our thousands of young men and women of impressionable age to their own country, educating them in their universities, so that they return to the motherland, saturated with the western modes of life and thought. Not long ago, they used to

refer to England as "home." Dancing, dressing, drinking, smoking, swearing and swagger were considered marks of being "civilized." In the various departments of government service in which they entered, such as the Indian Civil Service, Police, Medicine, Education, Law, etc., they injected, as tools of the Government, alien ideals, without any regard for India's requirements of her millennial experience. A few sensitive souls such as Aurobindo Gosh, Surrendra Nath Bannerjee, Subash Chandra Bose and others became disgusted with this subtle process of denationalization and disservice to the country, and resigned. But every England-returned boy in the Indian administration formed a part of the virile bodyguard of the ruling race, an outpost of alien culture.

### **Glorification of the "logic of the fish"**

Our present-day education represents success of philosophy of science and machine. All our institutions of higher learning are situated in cities, creations of the mechanized milieu. The success of physical sciences has led to our indiscriminate homage to the philosophy they represent, struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, and the exigencies of war have reinforced emphasis on industrial and technological subjects. But the social implications of emphasis on this type of education are not adequately realized. Science and machinery, in their uncontrolled state, have precipitated the present world crisis, and if India will not be careful, if Indian education will not keep an even balance between the demands of the



physical and the social sciences, she will be engulfed in the same catastrophe as the West. While the government of the country is being forced to move in the direction of integration under impact of world forces, our universities continue to perpetuate the anachronistic and the most dangerous tradition of the western education, which is bifurcation of arts and sciences, thus impoverishing of both. There is no adjustment between education and the needs of the country. One wonders whether those who are at the helm of educational affairs in this country are even aware of the full import of the problem facing us. Till the outbreak of the present war, the emphasis was on a purely literary education ; now, there is a swing of the pendulum in the other direction, and yet, as Sir John Clapham, President of the British Academy wrote to the author not long ago, " the study of society is, for India in particular, not less but more important than the study of nature."

#### **Racket in texts and annotations**

The number of subjects in our universities has certainly increased in recent years ; the syllabuses are overburdened with unessential subjects, such as Greek and Roman Histories, dead languages of Europe, etc. A want of idealism still clings to our educational system. Our students are compelled to develop a mania for success in examinations ; they want the largest number of marks with the strictest economy of knowledge. Annotations abound ; writing and selling of them has become an organized racket. The younger generation does not leave the halls of learning

sufficiently strengthened to adjust itself to the new environments created by science and machine and discharge its duties to the nation on entering the arena of life. Mechanical instruction in Civics is given at the Intermediate level in colleges, but there is no instruction in citizenship. With the disintegration of the village and cityward migration, every boy and girl, who can afford, comes running to the college and the university, irrespective of his or her competency of higher education or the possibilities of employment. With the biological degeneracy going apace, the level of intelligence must go down, and this means lowering of the standards of education.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis is on quantity, all along the line. There is neither creative study on part of the students, nor efficient instruction on part of the teachers. Both have become cogs in the machine.

### **Students versus teachers**

The philosophy of machine and science is conflict, and the relationship between the student and the teacher is based on conflict. The teacher is no longer one who imparts wisdom and should be revered, as was the guru of the old ; nor is the student a candidate

<sup>1</sup> At an examination for M.A. in the University of the Punjab in 1945, the examinees went on strike because the papers set for the examination were stiff. *A.P.I.* Lahore, April 23, 1945. The Syndicate of Calcutta University had to appoint a Committee to enquire into the situation that had arisen out of assaults on inspectors at university examinations in some rural areas and to suggest preventive and remedial measures. This in the University that was once presided over by that doyen of Vice-Chancellors, Sir Asutosh Mukerjee, who also got the Calcutta University Commission appointed over a quarter of a century ago. Obviously, the situation is getting from bad to worse.

for wisdom. Indeed, according to the new philosophy of education that has the nation in its grip to-day, the students must earn and learn at the same time and thus support their education. As though we are not sufficiently sordid, without this appalling indoctrination in the early childhood, and that too in a country that prides itself on having supported Universities with enrolments of 10,000 and over, with free lodging and boarding, given to both the teachers and the students ! So low have we descended in our educational ideals. The teacher is the lowest paid employee in the present times.

### **Cumbersome educational machinery**

The educational machinery is atrociously slow, cumbersome, wasteful. The universities have Boards of Studies, Academic Councils, Senates, Syndicates, etc. Membership of these bodies goes by fighting elections, so that the so-called educators degenerate into hot campaigners for themselves or find places on these bodies through favour of some high god of the university. Barring a few exceptions, most of the members of these august assemblies have no conception of the new and liberalizing lines of thought ; a casual glance at the text-books prescribed for various university examinations and published annually in heavy, ugly University calendars, will reveal to us the backwardness of our education. Such calendars advertise openly ignorance of the educators to the world. Membership of these bodies is on par with membership of gangs and racketeering groups. Acceptance of each other's books as texts, examiner-

ships, invitations for special lectureships, election to offices of the various academic bodies, appointments to Committees for making appointments to University faculties, are some of the favours mutually exchanged by our "educators." They are grateful for small favours from those who can give them and will pay any price.

### **Waste in examinations**

According to figures collected by the author some years ago, approximately 500,000 thousand students fail in India per year, from matriculation upwards. If we calculate Rs. 500 as average annual expenditure per student, we arrive at the colossal figure of Rs. 25 crores as pure waste, apart from the enormous sums paid out in salaries and spent on educational buildings and machinery. And 500,000 years of life of young men and women gone to winds, with their hopes and dreams crushed to dust. It is this racketeering, which puts a few rupees into the pockets of the examiners and a few into the coffers of the universities, that is responsible for the strikes of the students, sabotage of examination papers, demands for dismissal of teachers, etc. One more touch is needed to complete the picture. One hears the criticism that even percentages of passes and failures are decided beforehand for various examinations! So complete is the dishonesty and debasement of our educators and examiners. Is it any wonder that our young students have their own organizations of the Trade Union type? Instead of changing the contents of education to suit the requirements of the country,

we keep down the number of probable seekers of employment by massacres at examinations. Our rulers have given us these so-called democratic bodies, but we have turned them into Dark Chambers for the "massacre of the innocents."

### **Students and lack of leadership**

The commercialized entertainment, the movie, the radio and the race course surround our young men and women in the cities ; it is only natural that there should be a craving for sensation. False ideals of "get rich quick " must dominate minds of the young people ; wealth has become the criterion of appraising greatness of individuals. The situation will be much worse when the new generation, drilled in ideology of education for earning, comes up and takes its place in national life. The seeds for scramble of worldly goods are sown in the early school and college days of the students. Our younger generation is no longer equipped to accept the social and religious controls which the last generation has known, the link with the past is being quickly broken. India's national *sangskaras* are being fast forgotten. Sex is rearing its head in our educational institutions. "The young barbarians" of Oxford have their prototypes in plentiful in our institutions. The blame lies with us, not with the students.<sup>1</sup>

### **What is "national" education for India ?**

We will be hard put to find men who have a scientific

<sup>1</sup> Sind School and College students have learnt the techniques of hold-up in broad daylight !

background in the problems of education for a backward country like India and in the twentieth century. This is the reason why the so-called scheme of post-war development of education of the Government of India has got away with being called "national." Frankly there is nothing national about the scheme. That system of education is national for India which would probe deep into the constituent elements of our national ethos, renovate them in terms of the liberalizing currents of thoughts of to-day, press science and machine in service of our ideals and thus enable India not only to hold her own in the councils of nations, but once again resume her ancient role of being their spiritual guide and teacher. A national system of education would devise techniques for communication of our national heritage to the safe keeping of the rising generation. Neither Talim Sangha of Sevagram nor the much propagandized government schemes pay a passing attention to this root-problem.

### **Science and machine can foster national unity**

Science and machine are at the moment running counter to the spirit of Indian culture. Instead, if they are properly controlled and mobilized in India's service, they will carry us far towards peace and welfare of India's masses and of the whole world. The movie and the radio, two objective traits of mechanized culture of the West, by being synchronized in the classroom for formal education of the young as well as of the adults, have helped to make a backward and illiterate country like Soviet Russia into a highly

educated, virile, patriotic nation in the course of twenty years. 1,000 broadcasting stations adopt this technique of education in the United States and they have cemented into a bond of unity 130 million people of heterogenous composition !<sup>1</sup> The national antipathies, brought by immigrants to America, have given place to deep reverence and love for the soil that has become holy in their eyes. If the same technique is adopted in India, if the Broadcasting Department is liquidated as a central subject and the various stations are handed over to the provincial governments for operation by universities and colleges, if a radio and movie set are carried to every village and synchronized for purposes of education, it should be possible to water down imposing statistical calculations of forty years and four hundred crores of rupees to one-fourth their dimensions ! And yet the Central Research Institute of Social Sciences that could have been of infinite assistance in solving some of these problems and that was recommended by a Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education as early as January 1941 has not materialized and the Board is still consulting dictionaries for definition of Sociology. It is imperative for us to remember that our educational salvation cannot lie in the hands of Macaulay and his successors, brought up in attitudes of conflict so characteristic of the culture of machine and science and of capitalistic, imperialistic Britain, however well meaning these office-holders may be. With the best

<sup>1</sup> The author made this suggestion in his lecture to the Indian Service Congress as early as January 1942.

of intentions, they will inject the poison of conflict from which it will take India long to extricate herself.

### **Absence of "educationists"**

The Education Departments which should be manned by specialists have fallen in the hands of clever clerks who hide their ignorance behind a facade of files and administrative techniques. A little investigation into the professional training of the Directors of Public Instruction of the various provinces and States will reveal to us the utter absurdity of perpetuating the present policy of combining teaching and administrative functions of the Department. Men who have achieved some modicum of success as teachers in Government Colleges are drafted into the administrative branch of the Department, where their talents, meagre as they are, are lost behind piles of files, while clerks in these offices are re-drafted into teaching positions after having given up teaching work for many years ! Thus, the Directors of Public Instructions might have been intelligent instructors in their colleges, but that does not entitle them to holding important and responsible posts where they have to deal with the problems of education for a country, like India, illiterate and backward. The consequences are disastrous ; both the teaching and the administration suffer. Notwithstanding the wastage of 70 to 80 per cent of time, money and energy on primary and secondary education, year after year, there is no change in the educational policies throughout the country.

Nor will the qualifications of most of the Vice-



Chancellors stand scrutiny ! Almost all of them are retired judges steeped in court atmosphere, which is usually saturated with conflict. A stray Vice-Chancellor is a professor or a doctor. Not one has the ghost of an idea of educational problems and administration in the present-day world of rapid change.

### **Break-up of organic unity of knowledge**

But the deadliest blow of the alien culture has been aimed at the fundamental ideal of Indian education, which, as we have seen, was organic unity of all knowledge and harmonious interdependence between the physical sciences, which pertain to environments, *prakriti*, and the social sciences, which pertain to man's social and spiritual evolution, *purusha*. That is why in India physics merged into metaphysics, poetry became the vehicle of both, and all merged into the science of medicine as one organic whole. But to-day that unity is gone. The bifurcation of Arts and Sciences in education has produced specialists, with split personalities, imbued with attitudes of hostility towards each other. The protagonists of physical sciences are ranged in various camps ; they could only be brought together by the Government with the tempting offer of an Indian Academy of Sciences ! The social scientists are a little better disposed towards integration and are willing to come under the ægis of a central Academy of Social Sciences, but they find it hard to disavow their intellectual isolationisms, still seek security behind the forbidding frontiers of their

subjects. Such fissiparous tendencies perpetuate the most dangerous tradition of European education in our midst, which is atomism, individualism, analysis, absence of integration and synthesis.<sup>1</sup> The consequences have been fatal to the growth of Indian nationality, to the intellectual growth of the masses, to the development of integrated personality, and unless this situation is remedied forthwith and a unification is brought about between the disciplines that deal with both *life* and *form*, *purusha* and *prakriti*, India will remain divided against itself, its rising generations utterly oblivious of the art of integration that made India great and imprinted on her civilization the seal of immortality.

## VIII

### Politics—an arena of conflict

When we come to view India's political scene, the effects of conflict of cultures assume alarming proportions. It is true that as a result of being drawn into the vortex of world politics, India has become conscious of the trends of national and international affairs. The winning of independence from an alien government is our chief concern, even though we engage in furious communal controversies. Every

<sup>1</sup> The reader will recall the circumstances under which the late Sir J. C. Bose was not admitted to the membership of the Royal Society of Great Britain for nearly twenty years. The reason was that he was a botanist, a physiologist, a psychologist and a philosopher, rolled into one, while to be a scientist, in the strict sense of the word, was meant to be only one and nothing else.

phase of life is discussed in the press and on the platform. Having had to fight two wars for her imperialistic rulers, India has become world-minded and conscious of the role she can play in the council of nations.

### **Alien ideologies**

Through long association with the West, India has become thoroughly saturated with the political ideologies of the West. India is flooded with the various western economic and social gospels, and they find their way into our villages through the medium of the cheap vernacular press. To this should be added the contribution of the metropolitan press and the ceaseless pressure borne in upon India by the high-powered broadcasting stations from the storm-centres of the West, and we shall have a rough idea of the babble of tongues let loose on the soil. India is a battle-ground of many rival gospels, fighting for mastery. Sooner than later, socialism or communism must dominate the scene ; “one party and one leader ” will be the order of the day. World events will force India to hammer out her differences into a workable harmony. India has been drilled in the politics of strife. With the cessation of the war, India's hungry millions are demanding drastic change in the political and economic spheres, and this change will come through strife.

### **Democracy based on conflict**

For the present, democracy, a child of machine and science, is being transplanted in India, with all

its appalling futilities. We, like the West, have begun to believe in the hallucination of numbers. We must have large electorates, legislatures with large numbers of members, but it doesn't worry us whether these representatives attend the sessions or not, look upon their tasks as grave responsibilities, and whether they have the intelligence to understand and appreciate the significance of the complex problems of a changing social order. We judge the strength of our political organizations by their size. Quantity reigns supreme; quality is at a discount. It is the mob-psychology that prevails. Those who wear a particular kind of head-gear, have been to jails for a few months, or have avowed nominal allegiance to the gospel of non-violence and the charka, have earned the right of sitting in the deliberative halls of the nation that has the tradition of placing one "Brahman," one man of wisdom, above the "madding crowd." Democracy, as an ally of capitalism, has been played out in the West ; it will be given a new lease of life in our country for some time. Our leaders will have a tremendous task of replanning our political life in terms of our national experience and requirements when they come into power.

### **"The political boss"**

The modern technique of propaganda is throwing up into limelight a new type of leader, who bears a close resemblance to the political boss of the West. With the printing press and the platform at his disposal, he has learned the art of exploiting the enthusiasm of the masses under the cloak of patriotism.

While the rulers were foreigners, much could pass muster ; with the transference of power into our hands, separation of self from service will mean the question of life and death for the nation. Mahatma Gandhi's fasts and prayers to purge the Congress of the corrupt elements are disconcerting. The press is full of open accusations against some ministers taking bribes. We have developed a plethora of parties ; one province could boast of eleven in pre-war years ! Our politicians are picking up the art of lobbying and jobbery. The capitals, federal and provincial, were full of representatives of high-pressure groups who wanted some sort of " protection."

### **Conflict in inter-provincial relationships**

One of the most dismal fields of study of effects of the new culture of machine and science is that of inter-provincial relationships. Fate called India to a synthesis of peoples, races, religions, philosophies. People moved freely from province to province, made their residences far away from their homes. This free mingling of people was further augmented by railways and other mechanical devices of the machine-culture. But by a curious twist in our psychology, we have become victims of petty provincialism, division, isolation, which is very much analogous to the aggressive nationalism of the western nations, some of which are smaller than our districts. The Bengalees, they say, only love their own language, while the Mahrattas hate every other language except their own ! The Tamilians have put up a vigorous protest against the introduction of Hindi in their

institutions, while they carry their 'sadam' and 'rasam' even when they go to Simla! They are afraid of oblivion overtaking their culture under the attack of Brahminism and Hinduism. The Bombay people have no use for Sindhis and Sindhis dislike the Punjabis, the Cutchis, the Gujratis, and the Marwaris, who have invaded their small province. Bengal and Bihar are always at war with each other. Andhra is clamouring for a separate administration of its own, while Kerala is quarrelling for recognition of its cultural uniqueness. India seems to threaten to break up in the same manner as Europe has always been broken up by the petty provincial jealousies, fostered by this culture of machine and science, and the flame of mutual hatred is continuously fed by the demagogue and the politician. If the Congress High Command has been compelled to accept this Balkanisation of India in a mild form, it is because the philosophy of conflict and self-interest has come to stay with us. We are subverting the processes of history, and with our limited vision, we are segregating people into their respective provinces. The Provincial Public Service Commissions advertise widely for applications for government posts, but they don't fail to make it clear that only the residents of the province need apply! We are sacrificing talent for the sake of provincial preferences and nepotism. But when viewed as processes of social life, they are exactly the same as those national hatreds that have made Europe a shambles and produced two holocausts of blood and flames in our generation. Only we have no weapons to carry on warfare, but the conflict-

patterns, both in India and the West, have a family-likeness. To look upon India as a part of the world and envisage her problems from national and international points of view is something very different from thinking in terms of a community, a party, and a province. That way lies death. The nemesis that has overtaken the West will be India's fate. Migration of people from one province to another and from one strata of society to another, is one of the factors of social progress. The danger of an alien government foisting upon us a type of Constitution that might serve to accelerate the process of our national disintegration is no more. But there is some organic defect in our character, and that is lack of that stability and idealism that enables a nation to stand the shock of an alien culture and adapt it to its needs.

### **Aggressive and assertive rights**

The philosophy of rights, aggressive and assertive, is a creation of mechanical civilisation. The possessors and the dispossessed are always engaged in a mutual war. We, in India, are immortalising these legal fictions in our Constitution. Duty, dharma, an intelligent adaptation to environment, with one's feet firmly fixed in the eternal verities, finds no place in our life. Our future generations, drilled in these dogmas of rights and privileges, in this philosophy of success at the cost of the other fellow, will rush at each others throats, as will these provinces fight with each other. The repetition of Europe's history, in a slightly different form, is not an impossibility in India.

No matter how stable our political organisations and party programs, the process of national disintegration can slip through and clutch at our souls. A strong, central government is an indisputable necessity for India at her present stage of political development.

### **Corrupt and incompetent administration**

Public administration in India is anachronistic, inefficient and corrupt. A college lad, with an I.C.S. stamped on him, is supposed to be omniscient, and he can fill every post in the administrative machinery, be it law, education, prisons, census, police, revenue, finance, industry, communication, etc. Yet every one of these offices requires mastery of specialized techniques. As early as Chandragupta's reign, in the seventh century B.C., significance of trained persons was realized. It was said that only a man possessing scientific knowledge of metals, of alloys, of methods of mining, of labour problems, could hold the office of a Minister of Mines ! The significance of such specialized training has been lost on us, and an alien government, preoccupied with problems of empire-building, is none too ready or willing to learn these lessons itself or communicate them to its dependencies. The so-called "steel-frame structure" of the Indian Civil Service, collapsed under the strain of war.<sup>1</sup> According to the Bengal Famine Com-

<sup>1</sup> In his address on Science and Indian National Reconstruction, delivered before the Indian Science Congress, in January, 1942, at Baroda, the author had uttered a word of warning against the extravagant claims of the I. C. S. for omniscience. Since then we have seen the utter debacle of the morale of the whole administration of our country, and it is rather encouraging to find so eminent a scientist as Sir Shanti Swarup Shatnagar, President of the Indian Science Congress, January, 1945, taking up the same cry and levelling his guns against the I. C. S. !



mission, the recent famine, which took a toll of some millions of lives, was a man-made famine. The distributive machinery for food supplies broke down owing to ineptitude and lack of foresight of the government officials.

### **Sordid nepotism**

Recruitment to services is conducted on communal lines. "The ratio" of offices, in plain language, of loaves and fishes, has become a major issue of conflict between the various communities. A sordid nepotism has overtaken us.

### **Lack of world vision**

We have become aware of the world situation, but our knowledge is superficial. Our education has kept us ignorant of the forces that incarnate in the world pattern. Lack of this capacity of integrating the world picture in which one sees the various world forces like pawns in a game of chess and of foresight that enables one to predict events or anticipate new acts in the world drama are obverse and reverse of the same coin. Without such knowledge, a lackey of a Foreign Office of a western power can be a match to any popular leader.<sup>1</sup> This serious lacuna in our mental equipment, bemoaned by even Aurangzeb, has paralysed our political movement, which could only draw its inspiration from the world drama. Gandhiji has never paid any attention to the interplay of world forces, while the shrewd rulers have not

<sup>1</sup> Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a world-statesman today because he has a firm grasp of the world situation.

failed to exploit this weakness in his armour. We shall have won our independence because the world forces were in our favour in spite of ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

### **No Schools of Social Sciences**

Notwithstanding the fact that education has been under our control for more than twenty-five years, no University has yet organized a School of Social Sciences where national and international problems could be scientifically studied and practical training given to our youth in the sciences and arts of nation-building and national planning. Sociology is unknown, while elements of Political Science forms a part of the Honors Course in undergraduate education and a few Universities have Departments where post-graduate research is carried on, but no University Department of Politics can claim to cover our political problems, world affairs, diplomacy, comparative governments, municipal administration and constitutional and international law. And yet India's contributions in these fields are on par with those of modern advanced nations. The descendants of Manu, Shukra, Kautiliya and Abul Fazul have a great past to live up to. India's recent accomplishments at the U.N.O. give promise of a great future.

### **Panchayat in ruins**

Our panchayat is in ruins. Its sociological significance as a repository of our cultural values and as

<sup>1</sup> And yet Gandhiji sought the aid of President Roosevelt for solution of the Indian deadlock when the leaders were behind the prison-bars. He has no hesitation in appealing to the world to feed our starving millions during the present crisis !

an agency for synthesising variant wills into a general will, of protecting the populace from the deadly centripetal pull of an over-centralised government, of expeditious civil administration affecting the general welfare of communities living in small units, does not seem to have been adequately appreciated. The Department of Local Self-Government has been in the hands of our ministers since the days of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, and yet there is not one province that can pride itself on having revived this time-honoured, useful institution against which the alien, highly centralized government levelled its attack on its arrival in this country.<sup>1</sup> The success of the N.R.A. and the A.A.A. in the early years of Roosevelt administration was mainly due to the creation of a general will through small committees and conferences, like panchayats, functioning in the rural and the urban areas of the U.S.A. Presence or absence of panchayats may make all the difference between a peaceful or a bloody revolution in the country when the tempo of cultural change is accelerated.

## IX

### **Commercialized entertainment**

Science and machine have transformed very radically our techniques of emotional release and entertainment. *Rasa Lila*, dramatization of episodes from

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, the Governments of the United Provinces and the Central Provinces have introduced legislation aimed at revival of these time-honoured institutions.

our vast religious and sacred lore by travelling troupes of actors, acted as a powerful mechanism for preservation and transmission of our cultural heritage to the illiterate, rustic folks of the villages. But now movie and radio have routed out the *Rasa Lila*. Cinema houses multiply by the dozen in the cities, and travelling picture-shows are invading the villages as well. Our people witness movie-pictures, made in India or abroad, but they are based on alien canons of ethics and esthetics. Our glamour-girls have started a controversy as to why kissing on the stage should not be allowed ; some of these high priestesses of free morals do indulge in this pleasantry, but with the torso behind a screen, only a kick showing the exultation being indulged in ! If one strings together the titles of some of the pictures released in recent times, he will discover what type of entertainment fare the nation is fed upon. Profit-making motive has taken possession of our arts and entertainment. When greed takes hold of art that should ennoble and transform the animal in man into the god that he is, the depravity of a nation has begun. The politicians may be the leaders of the country, but the cinema stars are its heroes and heroines. The populace knows more of *affaires de cœur* of these new makers of India than of the sufferings of Sita and Savitri. People have more pictures of the former in their parlours than of the latter. India now worships at the shrine of Eros under the guise of art.

### **Mongrel music**

Our music is going through a metamorphosis that

overtook the music of the nations that came under the spell of the culture of machine and science. Indian music is essentially devotional and based on certain well-defined scientific principles, no matter what part of the country it may belong to. But now, the environment, surcharged with desire for sensation, has submerged the finer feelings and introduced a large element of eroticism. So, our devotional songs have given place to doleful little ditties of the love-lorn. There is no harmony of expression or sound ; it is just a jumble of words that we hear in movie and on the radio. Our chaste, classical music will soon be a thing of the past, with few to play and to appreciate. Mechanization in technique and tune has taken deep root here. The All-India Radio broadcasted during the war whole movie-pictures, once a week for the delectation of Indian fighting forces abroad. This was a systematic vulgarisation of the nation's tastes.

### **Vulgarity in dance**

Indian dance, excepting for its few exponents who are dedicated to radiating its spiritual fragrance through beauty of motion and gesture, has taken on the climate of the times, and India's inarticulate woman is finding in it an avenue of self-expression not quite wholesome in tone. Troupes of dancers tramp up and down the country, but they pander mostly to the tastes of an urbanised, vulgarised population that lives in surface-consciousness, with a heavy armour of self-defence and sophistication. Their shallow applause and ephemeral admiration

and appreciation are not signs of renaissance of Indian culture ! What folly and self-deception ! The city-dweller has a warped mentality, a code of distorted values. He comes to enjoy the sensual element in entertainment, even when it has a religious background and purpose. The artiste must give what the audience expects, highly provocative and suggestive gestures and sensual display of the human flesh. The cabarets and hotels in cities have their dance-halls patronized by the city-dwellers with jaded nerves in search of jazz.

### **“ Streamlined ” architecture**

Indian art, which began under happy auspices, is beginning to succumb under the onslaught of commercialism of the culture of machine and science. The art of painting moods of life and nature does not pay ; there is no cash in it. But when it becomes a hand-maid of commercial advertisement, the dividends go up. To beautify and purify every aspect of life is certainly the function of art, but that is not the motive with which it is used to-day. The purpose is profits by appealing to the base in us. The architecture of the large cities prides itself on being “ streamlined.” It broadcasts its indecent, uncivil haste from the house-tops (as well as from foundations and sides). It is hideous, utterly out of harmony with our environments and traditions. The apartment-houses along the Marina in Bombay, for instance, look like cement-boxes set up in haste. Our greatest humiliation is the ugly structure, comprising the Viceregal Lodge and the Legislative Chamber, in our

national capital. The attack against Indian ideals in architecture, as in other arts, has begun and will bear its tragic fruit much sooner than we expect.

### **Erotic and neurotic literature**

The short-lived period of literary renaissance seems to be passing away. During the last century, India produced a few high class poets and novelists. But the sources of inspiration are drying up and the race is approaching a period of intellectual sterility. Punjab specializes in pounding out erotic literature of all types, short story, novel, drama, and now Bengal has joined with a few publishing houses that issue Indian editions of the droll literature of the West. The contagion is spreading through the country and one wonders how the Central and the Provincial Governments can find paper for publication of this literature, while the scholars go begging for it !

### **Western dress**

If " apparel proclaims the man," then the extent of our westernization can be gauged by the dress of the educated class in the country. There has been a great change for the better, thanks to the non-co-operation movement, but the war ushered an era of the uniform, a bush-shirt and shorts. Both have much in them to recommend, but it will be tragic if our kurtas, flowing dhoties and salvars disappear and our women-folk discard their saris in favour of frocks and skirts. Cloth-shortage is serious.

### **Increase in meat diet**

Our food in cities has become westernized. People eat white bread, white sugar ; every other shop is a

restaurant or a cafe, where salads, creams, cold drinks and crushes are available. Our cooling and strengthening drinks have given place to iced, carbonated water, and the incidence of pneumonia and tuberculosis among the wealthy class is on the rise. Consumption of imported canned food has gone up enormously. Beef and pork are now easily available, fresh and canned. Cruelty to animals in the slaughter-houses is indeed horrible; dehydration of meat will affect our food-habits considerably. In many places in the south high class Brahmins dine and wine in the city and pose as vegetarians before their simple wives. The cow, "a poem of pity," to use Gandhiji's classic expression, is badly treated. After being given insufficient fodder and robbed of her milk, it is let loose in the cities to feed from the garbage-tins in the streets. The monstrous cruelty of the *phookha* in Bengal is still fresh in our minds. The large cities are like drains into which pour train-loads of animals daily for slaughter; India is fast becoming a cruel, callous nation. India's young men are trained in vivisection in their medical schools. Monkeys are sold abroad for extraction of glands, while we have a tradition of worshipping *Hanuman*, the Monkey-God! One pre-war provincial Congress Government had no compunction in leasing out land to a foreign corporation for a minx farm for skins! Bootlegging during prohibition in some provinces was a common phenomenon. The rich could buy all the whisky and rum they wanted, while the provincial governments wanted to deny the poor



working-class man a modicum toddy which protected him against beri-beri.

### **Western sports on communal lines**

Western games, sports and races have come to stay. Whenever India became a little restive politically, its rulers sent out their cricket, football, golf, hockey and polo teams or invited Indians to the Empire countries, and the unsuspecting masses let off a lot of steam in the excitement. The sport-fans in India spend more money on gate-fees in two days than would be required to run a first-grade college for a couple of years ! Many families are ruined on race courses. We have forgotten our *asanas*, *kushtis* and other games that strengthen the physical body but at the same time refine it and make it sensitive to higher influences. A healthy body does not mean a coarse, heavy body, full of animal passion. *Asanas*, combined with *pranayam*, under proper guidance, will give vigour, stamina and refinement as no other exercises will. We have forgotten this, one of the magnificent traditions of cultural life, and now live on second-hand enjoyment of alien sports, without learning anything of the sportsmanship of the westerners. We have Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Bora, Sikh and numerous other gymkhanas, all run on communal lines, with a pernicious rivalry between all of them.

### **Social diseases**

Social diseases, which came to India as a gift from the West, are on the increase. They are no longer confined to the cities and the sea-ports, but are

invading the rural areas also. The last war intensified prostitution to an unprecedented scale. The health and vitality of the nation are at a low ebb. Fortunately, we are awakening to the superiority of our indigenous systems of medicine over those of the West; ours are much cheaper and more efficacious. But the day is still far off when we shall have eschewed completely the alien system, given medical aid to every man, woman and child in need of such aid, and taught the medicinal properties of various herbs and plants to our mothers in homes to meet emergencies. The diseases of civilization, cancer, etc., are taking a heavier toll to-day. Malaria, plague, cholera, kala-azar, though partially controlled, still claim many victims year after year. The endurance power of individuals has deteriorated considerably.

### **“ Rejuvenation ”**

The faster moves the pace of our physical decadence, the louder become the shameless advertisements for rejuvenating pills and tablets made out of animal glands. The attack on the individual is scientifically planned by pictorial representations of “ he-men,” “ it-women.” An increasing number of young medicos went to that mecca of the medical world, Vienna, to learn the art of grafting glands and rejuvenation. The lust of life, which is death, is on the increase in India to-day.

### **Increase in crime**

Crime, which is an unfailing index of social mal-adjustment, is going forward by leaps and bounds.

Prostitution is on the increase ; there are regular syndicates, though of smaller sizes than their western prototypes, dealing in human flesh for enjoyment of man's passions. There are thousands of prostitutes, western and eastern, in our large cities, the former imported from abroad, the latter from India's countryside. The rich men in cities have their homes, but also private arrangements for their *affaires d'amour*. Train and mail robberies, rape, kidnapping, traffic in women and children, are quite common in India now, and the papers publish the news in flaring headlines. If we go through the official reports submitted by the Inspectors-General of the various provinces in recent years, we find them all complaining of the frightful increase in crime. The criminal in India emulates his colleagues of the West ; he sees his exploits depicted on the screen, and like him, presses science into service. Hatchets and daggers are now replaced by pistols and guns, stolen from the government armouries ; it will be quite a different story when the government removes the embargo over arms and the volatile temperament of the tropics gets hold of them, and when the forces, with all their attitudes of cruelty drilled into them during their military training and service, return to civilian life.

### **Police, cruel, corrupt, ignorant**

The police throughout the country is corrupt, cruel and ignorant. There is not one Police Training School run on up-to-date lines. The position of the police in India, under alien rule, has been similar to that of Gestapo in Germany, an agency of tyranny

over the people. Cruelty is still resorted to for extorting confessions. A primitive legal code that takes no account of human factors involved in the commission of crime is still on the statute book. Sociological jurisprudence, which is one of the unique contributions of India, is hardly known to the legal luminaries of the country. Scientific handling of crime and the criminal, with due regard for the personality of the criminal and the demands of intelligent citizenship, will be one of the biggest problems for the future national government of our country.

## X

### **Religious rivalries**

But it is in the realm of religion that the debacle of India has been the most dismal. Notwithstanding the continuous political commotion on the surface, extending over some centuries, the stream of India's destiny seems to have flowed on to its fulfilment, the realization of the One amidst the many. The fellowship of faiths, for which the foundations were laid by the Vedic rishis, continued to be a living reality until India came in contact with the modern technological culture of the West. Hinduism took into its pantheon the gods of the primitive tribes, refined them, and thus contained all the gradations of religious thought and aspiration, from animism to the apotheosis of human thought, the Vedantic monism. India gave shelter to Christianity in the

first century of the Christian era and offered freedom of worship to the followers of Zoroaster, who fled from persecution in their homeland in about the tenth century. Islam came with "one book, one prophet, and a sword dedicated to both," but India absorbed these rugged Saracenes, softened them, even though it took her centuries of suffering. The memory of this latest example of synthesis is still fresh in our minds and deserves more than a passing mention.

### **Toleration in Islam**

Islam, in the early days of its glory, when it was both a religion and a civilization, served as a link between India and the West. It became the torch-bearer of truth in Europe, when the lights of civilization went out and the lurid flames of Inquisition were the only source of Europe's illumination. In spite of Islam's vilification by Christianity since the days of the Crusades, Islam showed a magnanimous spirit of tolerance to the persecuted races of Europe. Turkey became a place of refuge for the Jews of Spain. In the 15th century, the Calvinists of Hungary and Transylvania and the Unitarians of the latter fled from the persecution of the House of Hapsburg to Turkey. In the middle of the 18th century, the Russian State Church drove out the old believers who also sought refuge in Turkey.

In India, while the political history of Islam was one of turbulence and disorder, its cultural history reveals this process of assimilation and synthesis at work. The plurality of interests became trans-

formed into a community of ideals and aspirations. Akbar spoke of Din Illahi, a Universal Faith. There emerged a marked religious rapprochement. Hindus and Moslems worshipped at each other's shrines. Trade and economic interests crossed the political boundaries of the communities ; even inter-marriage was not unknown. A uniformity of customs and manners arose. Climate softened the sturdy invaders and the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere of the nation absorbed them, made them a part of the body-politic of the nation. The rulers were not mere birds of passage.

### **Christianity, an instrument of the State**

But this process of synthesis has been seriously balked of its fulfilment with the advent of the representatives of the culture of science and machine. Instead of aiding in this " manifest destiny " of India, the new culture has turned tables against her. Mechanical means of transportation have set the faces of the new rulers in the direction of their country, their sojourn in India being but a prelude to a life of ease and luxury in their country, while their administrative policies have been deliberately directed towards breaking up the cultural and spiritual unity of the nation. The ascendancy of the technological nation-state in Europe indented heavily on the power of the Church and reduced it to being an agency of the State. The imperialistic nations of Europe made a tool of their churches and used them to break up the spirit of nationalism and culture of their conquered races. When the missionaries of the ruling

race tried to improve education and render social service to their victims, it was with a view to expand commerce of their own countries, convert the people to Christianity, and to render them amenable to exploitation. Thus, with the establishment of political suzerainty of the imperialistic power in India, there began, what we might call in terms of modern warfare, a *pinzer* movement to strangle the spirit of Indian religion and culture. A highly-paid ecclesiastical department and a subsidized missionary machine conducted on scientific lines formed the two flanks, while political favouritism of the Anglo-Indian and the convert formed the front. Thus, India did not come in contact with the teachings of Christ, but with a part of the ruler's administrative machine in another form, the avowed purpose of which was the same that Macaulay had in view in formulating India's educational policies, to bring into being a group of saboteurs of Indian culture. Annihilation of India's religious unity was the direct result of this *pinzer* movement. It is important to remember that *this Christianity of the nation-state that came to India was not a religion but a culture*. It was a mode of life, not ethics, not a form of worship or a path of holiness. Kipling spoke only half truth when he said, "There a'int no ten commandments east of Suez"; they aren't any where !

### **Its anti-Indian and anti-Christ character**

The presence of over 150 Christian denominations in India, the inaccurate and misleading translations of the

Holy Scripture, the Church Hymns set to alien music, the weekly exhortations which give the impression of religion being a matter of Sunday only, the strange paraphernalia of the Church and its uncomfortable furniture for Indians, the spirit of sectarianism and caste cleavages which deny the fundamental principle of Christianity—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,—the literal and misleading interpretations of some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, such as Virgin Birth, original sin, vicarious punishment, etc., the wide gulf between profession and the daily life of the missionaries, the relegation of the convert to the faith to humiliating subordination because of his race and political position,<sup>1</sup> open support of the rulers in their policies of “frightfulness,” these and many other factors have robbed this institutionalized Christianity of its title to being considered an inspiring faith. India is justified in considering this Christianity as an agency of breaking up India’s spiritual integrity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These anomalies find their embodiment in the Indian Christian, who is neither fish nor fowl, neither fully Indian nor fully western, who considers India as his country but who owns spiritual allegiance to the mission offices in foreign countries that send out the “dough.” The Indian Christians have become conscious of their position and are now employing techniques which, like those of the Jesuit Robert de Nobilibus, verge on the deceptive. Christian names are given up for those of high-class Brahmans, Parsis, Sikhs, etc. Recently, one Christian, prior to his departure to U. S. to study the working of institutions of the physically-handicapped children, gave out to the press that he was going to continue the work of Swami Vivakananda! The gentleman did not realize the implications of his statement. Either he had disavowed his Christianity and had reverted to Hinduism or that he was going to do some work in the U. S. under false colours, thus throwing dust in the eyes of his Christian sponsors! Professor Paul Devanda, an



It is this anti-Indian and anti-Christ brand of Christianity—for, true Christianity would be neither and would fit in well with the Indian pantheon—that has thrown a challenge to every Indian faith and invited it to a fight for survival. The various Revivalist Movements, such as the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramkrishna-Vivekanand Movement and the Theosophical Society, are India's answer to this challenge. The Ramkrishna-Vivekanand Movement spoke unflinchingly of "aggressive Hinduism"; the Arya Samaj, under the dynamic guidance of Swami Dayanand Saraswati sought to lead Hinduism back to the pristine glory of the Vedic teachings and times, and brought back to the Hindu fold those who had embraced other faiths, while the Theosophical Society, under leadership of eminent occultists, gave a philosophico-scientific exposition of India's living faiths, revealing the meaning and mystery of its Ancient Wisdom, putting courage, confidence and pride in the hearts that had become faint, giving light to souls that had become bewildered. The success of these movements, such as they have

Indian Christian, addressing the World Council of Protestant Orthodox Churches, in Geneva, on February 22, 1946, is reported to have said: "There is undoubtedly a new antagonism to the work of the church. Nationalists disapprove of our activities, because they suspect our loyalty and regard our work as subversive of nationalism. Under a national government, we shall certainly find many obstacles placed in our way. We may have to face some amount of obstruction." *Daily Gazette*, Karachi, February 24, 1946. To give back Christ to the Christian Church and to the followers of the faith is one of India's major tasks. A great responsibility therefore lies on the shoulders of the Christians. They will need to understand their faith anew in the light of Indian Wisdom.

attained, has lain in meeting the challenge that the science-cum-machine culture, aided by institutionalized religion, offered to India's national ethos.

### **Pakistan**

The Pakistan movement, which is contrary to the spirit of Islam and is engineered by the alien rulers is also a counterpart of the Pan-Islamism in Europe. Pan-Islamism itself gathered momentum as the nation-state gained ascendancy in the West and forced the steady retreat of the Khalifa from the European continent. Protagonists of Pan-Islamism may rationalize the movement however they will, give it a religious and spiritual colour, it is essentially an outcome of the spirit of defeatism in Europe, and all the Pan-Islamic movements have increased in intensity in proportion to the setback the Islamic power has received in Europe. Every encroachment on the spiritual power and prestige of the Khalifa in Turkey had repercussions in the Islamic world. Pakistan has thus both international as well as national back-ground, and any rapprochement on paper between the two communities in India can no more bring peace to the land than did 325 treaties between the various European nations between the two wars! Both long and short range social changes, cutting across communal frontiers, will have to be introduced to fight the virus of separatism that has got a firm grip of India, and in these reforms, both science and

machine will have to be pressed into service to counteract the poison of communalism.<sup>1</sup>

### **And other Astans**

But as to Hinduism and Islam, this culture of machine and science from the West has thrown a challenge to other faiths and their followers are clamouring for their isolated rights against each other, thus precipitating cultural and spiritual chaos in India. Instead of joining together and making a common cause against the common enemy, which is the moral and spiritual debacle of the individuals of all faiths, they are engaged in a mutually destructive warfare. Dravidstan, with its Self-Respect Movement, Sikhistan, Achutastan, and many other Astans have cropped up like mushrooms, all trying their utmost to tear down spirit of religious unity and fellowship of faiths that has been India's unique contribution to mankind. They are all fruits of the same seed planted on India's soil, the secular, atomic, destructive, disintegrative culture of machine and science from the West.

### **Demoralization of the individual**

The attack of this culture on attitudes and religious life of the individual has been no less menacing and

<sup>1</sup> Looked at from international standpoint, Pakistan will gather strength as Pan-Islamism in Asia and Africa takes definite shape, as it is in the course of doing, and becomes the rallying cry of the Islamic world. The entire block of Moslem nations, from Morocco on the Atlantic to China on the Pacific has been affected by the recent war and the followers of Islam will become increasingly aware of the role they can play in international affairs. But it will be a long time before Islam, as a political power, will arise. The atom-age politics have changed the contours of the world-drama considerably.

degrading. India, like Tennyson's nature, is "red in tooth and claw." The conflict pattern here excels the law of the jungle in ferociousness ; everybody is at the neck of everybody else. Life of religion, inward withdrawal and self-control, has become a memory of the past. We live in the moment and in the senses. It is *kala yuga* and *kali yuga*. The recent war has brought to the surface the essential character of our souls. Hoarding, black-marketing, making money out of human blood, a callous disregard of the poor, the disabled, the socially disinherited, have exposed the essentially debased nature of the people. A new materialism is *in excelsis* in a nation that has occupied the vaunted position of being the spiritual mother of mankind.

## XI

### Poverty of original thought

Our creative faculties have become benumbed, and excepting for a spasmodic genius, whose voice soon gets smothered in the cries of poverty and pain around him or whom we give recognition after the outside world has set its seal of approval on him, we have no torch-bearers of Truth, as India has known it. As Radhakrishnan rightly remarks : "When the founts of life are drying up, when the ideals for which the race has stood for milleniums, the glow of consciousness, the free exercise of faculty, the play of life, the pleasure of mind and the fulness of peace, *Pranamam*, *mana-anandam*, *santi-samradham*, are decaying, it is

no wonder that the Indian is conscious of the crushing burden and not of the lifted weight. If the leaders of the generation have been content to be mere echoes of the past and not independent voices, if they have been intellectual middlemen and not original thinkers, this sterility is to no small extent due to the shock of the western spirit and the shame of subjection.”<sup>1</sup>

But the malady is much deeper. The best among us have despaired of any redemption for our country. Let Radhakrishnan continue: “Those who are untouched by the western influences are for a large part intellectual and moral aristocrats, who are indifferent to political issues, and adopt a gospel not of confident hope but of resignation and detachment. They think that they have little to learn or to unlearn, and that they do their duty with their gaze fixed on the eternal dharma of the past. They realize that other forces are at work, which they cannot check or control, and ask us to face the storms and disillusionment of life with the unruffled calm of self-respect.”<sup>2</sup> When a nation has renounced its ancient role in this manner, it is dark night for her soul. Death is a mere matter of time.

### **Spiritual decadence of the nation**

This, then, is the challenge of the culture of machine and science. Our education, marriage, family, neighbourhood, industries, arts, politics, religion, spiritual values and traditions are under assault. The general

<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, Sir S., *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 2, p. 774.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 775.

tempo of living has been accelerated. There is an intensification of competition. The natural, the animal and the human resources are ranged in warfare of mutual extermination. The older craftsmanship has become obsolescent and we have developed new techniques and machine operatives, accompanied by considerably expanded economic frontiers with complicated networks of political compulsions and controls. Our schemes of national planning are geared up to higher standards of living in terms of money and consumable commodities, neither of which are abundant for India's rapidly rising population. The caste, which absorbed the shock of rapid cultural change and revolutions, is fast giving place to a class-structure society, mobile, restless, uncreative, hostile to talent. There is disintegration of our rural areas and neighbourhoods; community sense, with all its folkways and *mores*, is fast disappearing. The old family is breaking up, and the subtle associations are giving place to new pursuits of sensation, of wealth, of urbanism, of fashion and frolic. The physical, mental and moral degeneracy of the race is going apace.

There is a corresponding change in our modes and moods of thought and beliefs. Quantity has taken place of quality; everything is spoken of in terms of numbers. Success is calculated in pecuniary terms, since cultural and social qualities are detachable from it. Acquisition of external goods is considered a virtue, a criterion of greatness, not appreciation, not cultivation of one's self. The life of calm, relaxed reflection has given place to thirst for speed, sensation,

quick dividends. We live in surface consciousness ; the slow ripening of judgment, of blossoming forth of personality, has no place in our lives now. The best among us are steeped in pragmatic philosophy ; they are communalistic, and provincialistic. Our sorrows are not serious, our joys have no depths. We are creatures of the moment. The past has been robbed of its glory and inspiration ; the future has no silver-lining. The soul of India is writhing in the tentacles of ignorance, indifference, apotheosized into " unruffled calm of self-respect." India's soul is in thrall. There are few signs of her determination to be free. Indeed, there is imminent danger of India's cultural defeat.

## **V. PLANNING SYNTHESIS : EXAMPLES**

### **I**

We have outlined briefly the forces playing in and around India. A culture of machine and science, with conflict as its fundamental motif, has held India in thrall for a century and a half and thrown a deadly challenge to her national ethos. A new world, born of purposeful planning for peace and war, with emphasis on overall reconstruction of national life, has appeared on the horizon. The era of drift, of uncontrolled change, has passed out of sight. We now live in an age of planning. On India devolves the responsibility of not only falling into step with the world drama, but also of supplying the metaphysic of the new age, for she alone has the wisdom and the vision to do so.

#### **Planning, a normal phase of life**

There are two parts of our subject, planning and synthesis. Let us begin by defining the meaning, method and content of these terms. Planning is a normal phase of human life. Building a house, a ship or an aeroplane involves numerous processes which ultimately find physical embodiment in the required article. There have to be blue prints of the engineer. These are based on careful calculations, correlating size, materials, human element, location and purpose. A residential house is built on a pattern different from



that of an office or a hospital, a commercial ship from that of a warship, a transport plane from that of a fighting bomber. The next stage is to get together the materials and start the actual construction. This is the work of the specialists who know what materials to use and in what place. A central heating plant in a house is placed in the basement, not in the attic. The engines of a ship are placed on the lowest deck, not in the Captain's Bridge. To these can be added one contribution which an intelligent and up-to-date engineer can make, and that is making use of the latest contributions of science and machine in the construction of the required thing, so that it will yield the maximum amount of comfort, and require the minimum amount of material, cost and subsequent repairs.

### **Examples of National Planning**

There is nothing extraordinary about the above-mentioned statements, excepting that they were not adequately appreciated till the example of Soviet Russia forced them on the attention of the world. The Middle Way of Sweden, the N.R.A. of U.S.A., the Nazism of Germany and the Fascism of Italy followed the trail blazed by the Soviet Republic. Overall planning of a nation's life requires a type of education that can take in life as a whole, as an engineer can take in all the details connected with the building of a house as a whole. In preparing the blue-prints, all phases of the nation's life have to be taken into consideration and synthesised for purposes of control and change.

### **The essentials of planning**

The essentials of planning are a clear conception of the necessity of planning ; goals or objectives ; survey of the materials with which to build ; co-ordination of the various parts into an organic whole ; prediction of changes ; evaluation or self-audit ; planning of the plan itself, and finally, the means of achieving the goal. Let us go into these briefly.

#### **1. The necessity of planning**

The necessity of planning has arisen out of the crisis created by rapid and uncontrolled advances in science and technology. The whole world is passing through one of the greatest revolutions of historic times. Humanity has just emerged out of a devastating and desperate war in which titanic forces were unleashed for purposes of destruction, while her fate is precariously poised on the brink of a precipice. One modern tank contains more power for destruction than did all the armies of William the Conqueror or Tamurlane ! Science and technology have transformed the culture-complex of the entire world, and it must move along without the slightest possibility of turning back to a utopia or to self-annihilation. Science and machine have given birth to problems, economic, political, social, religious, industrial, educational, cultural and racial, and these are challenging man's intelligence for solution and his right to exist. India is a part of the world and is caught up in these

world forces. She can no more keep out of this vortex than she can hold back the Indian Ocean with a house-wife's broom-stick! Science and machine have come to India to stay. Science is taught in her schools, colleges and universities; science institutes and laboratories are multiplying. Applied science has been instrumental in imparting to the country a semblance of objective unity. The railway, the tram-car, the automobile, the telephone, the telegraph, the aeroplane, the broadcasting and other mechanical devices have broken down India's provincial isolations and quickened the tempo of her social and cultural change. The recent war gave a great impetus to industry and the government has great projects of industrialization. Science has entered into every phase of India's life, and our times correspond with the breakdown of the agricultural economy of the West. India is confronted with the problem of weaving this new world of science into the texture of her life, determining beforehand the pattern in which the two shall unite. It is the duty of every patriotic Indian to study and understand the adjustment that India must make if she is to endure the shock of history. She has to call up her resources of intelligence and adaptibility and solve this problem in terms of her national ethos.

## **2. The goals or objectives**

That brings us to the objectives or goals of planning. This will require a clear formulation of the picture of

the India we are aiming at. The various plans<sup>1</sup> have indicated their objectives. The industrialists and capitalists want to raise the standard of living and purchasing power of the masses. They want people to have enough to eat. They would like them to have houses, education, etc. They would like to see the country industrialized on western lines. The Socialists and Communists have their own goals or objectives. The Indian National Planning Committee wants an overall reconstruction of the nation in terms of human and spiritual values. But the most significant point that needs to be emphasised in Indian planning is the increasing use of science and machine, but in terms of our national values. The following statement of targets of our national planning may serve as a starting point for further discussion on the subject.

(a) With the aid of energy released by science and machine, we should build a new India. We should aim at a home for every family and supply it with every modern convenience ; consolidate India's scattered huts and hamlets into towns, which should be built on principles of modern town-planning, with wide streets, paved roads, electric lights, modern sanitation, schools, libraries, opportunities for creative use of leisure. India's children should be assured,

<sup>1</sup> Those that have attracted wide-spread attention are : *A Plan for Economic Development of India*, by Bombay magnates ; *Reconstruction in Post-War India*, by Sir M. Visveswaraya ; *People's Plan for Economic Development of India*, by M. N. Roy ; *Gandhian Scheme*, by Agarwall ; *Reports of Reconstruction Committee of the Council on Reconstruction Planning*, Government of India ; and, finally, the Plan by the Indian National Planning Committee, which is in the course of receiving final touches.

before they are born, the right to live and grow well. This will involve limitation and reduction of the numbers and a balanced land-man ratio. India's agriculture should be mechanized, collectivized. Science should renew our insight into the occult processes of ecological balance, harmony, so that we shall treat nature reverently and not consider her gifts as mere commercial commodities. India's cities should be decentralized, so that they shall not be easy targets for destruction in case of another aberration or give harbourage to all crime, misery and human degradation. We should combine culture, agriculture and industry. India's workers should be healthy, strong, contented, enlightened human beings, not mere "economic hands." India should control insensate exploitation of natural resources, maldistribution, export, manipulation of prices and lust of profits through speculation. Exploitation of nature and of man should not disfigure India's economic institutions. These must be reoriented to conservation of her cultural values and the requirements of human well-being.

(b) India's social structure will have to be so planned as to eliminate the baffling problems that have pulled down civilizations. Marriage should be protected from disintegrating influences of urbanization and industrialization, with all the bizarre experiments, abortions and frightful infantile mortality. India must preserve marriage as a sacred institution for a joint spiritual adventure. When her men and women are happy, integrated, contented individuals, and not denizens of the sub-human realm

as most of them are at present, there need be no incidence of crime, and maladjustment can be cured with the aid of a scientific criminology. The present legalized barbarism of revengeful punishment of the so-called criminal should give place to active assistance for his absorption into society.

(c) It is only when India's educational institutions have become modern ashramas, in towns apart, with the light of knowledge coming from both the East and the West, with teachers who are real brahmans and sanyasis and not mere job-hunters and time-servers, and the students become genuine candidates for wisdom and seekers for training in service that India's spiritual heritage stands a chance for survival from the cultural assault from the West. The life of both the teacher and the student should be studious, self-controlled and dedicated to training in one department of our nation's life. The young India should not lose their link with the past, and they should be trained to grow in reverence for, and homage to, the great seers and sages, saints and scientists, whose sublime idealism and achievements are our proud-heritage. A thorough grounding in social sciences, from high school upwards, should induct the younger generation in the ideals of social solidarity and liberal education, while vocational training should do away with misfits in life. India's institutions should be Temples of Learning and Labour.

(d) When freedom comes, we should recast India's political structure. A strong central government, capable of dealing scientifically with the problems of reorganization of provinces, authorities and mecha-

nisms ; of recruiting the necessary personnel on basis of specialized efficiency and leadership, and not nepotism ; of adapting techniques of social sciences to problems of public administration ; of dealing vigorously with the problems of corruption, provincial isolationism and nepotism ; of determining and expanding the scope of governmental activity in the fields of social control and moral well-being ; of correlating governmental expenditure with national income ; of determining position of the country in relation to other countries ; of training diplomats and employees for consular services along scientific lines ; of developing equality and freedom among the masses : these are some of the tasks awaiting intelligent minds and strong hands. Elimination of party strife ; scientific managerial administration in place of the present rotten one packed with aged pensioners ; fusion of interests of various communities and interests now engaged in internal warfare, would complete the picture. It is India's mission to devise institutions and mechanisms that can ensure realization of ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity and to introduce systems of election that will assuredly enlist services of philosopher-statesmen. India's new kshatriyas should be masters of science and machine, able to guard her honour, defend her soil from foreign aggression and internal discord. Mistress of her own household, India should once more become the spiritual mother of nations, friend of all, foe of none.

(e) Such overall reconstruction must involve reconditioning of the religious attitudes and ideals of the masses. A vapid religiosity, a meaningless

sacerdotalism, an inane emphasis on secularization of state, all these arise from ignorance and inadequate appreciation of all that is involved in religion. Real religion, with which India has experimented since time immemorial, as we saw in the early part of these pages, is unity of life, without distinction of race, caste, creed, colour, sex, and India's mission will remain unfulfilled if she should launch forth upon a career of secularization that has brought mankind to the brim of abyss. It is India's task to reveal once more to herself and to the world the unity of religion, philosophy and science, which are the real foundations of an ever-lasting civilization. Science can aid us in the realization of this unity amidst diversity. India's most imperative duty is the presentation of a new incarnation of the Wisdom of the Eternal, which embraces the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, the human and the superhuman, that unites the physical with the transcendental, the known with the unknown, the lower with the higher, the smaller with the larger. The world is famishing for want of this wisdom. Oneness, and not a mere fellowship of faiths based on some sort of mutual tolerance, is India's supreme task.

### 3. Survey of the resources

The third essential of planning is a *survey of the resources* with which to build. This requires exhaustive surveys of the nation's resources, natural and human, of the industrial, economic and agricultural set-up, of the contents and machinery of education, of the intelligence of the masses and their capacity to com-



prehend the significance of rapid changes, of the political and administrative machineries to see if they are equipped with adequate expert knowledge to handle the problems, of the religious and the moral values that sway, and move our minds to-day. The purpose of surveys should not be gathering of mere statistical data but to have adequate and properly sorted material on which to draw for purposes of correlation and construction, as we shall see presently. At present, we do not have any accurate data on which we can rely and formulate our policies. Every student of demography in our country knows that there is an error of at least 33 per cent. in vital statistics. It is obvious that planning food, for instance, on inaccurate data would mean only a widespread disaster.

#### 4. Co-ordination

(a) *Interdependence of parts.*—The next step in planning is co-ordination. Co-ordination has two aspects. First, a clear picture of the interdependence of the various parts of the plan, and second, a capacity to bring these parts together into organic whole. Usually, when people talk of co-ordination, they mean centralization of administration and control, while co-ordination has a reference to the interlocking of the various aspects of life, to their mutual interaction and the need of planning them together. Planning is usually thought of as running on parallel lines, while it should be really pictured as a central telephone exchange where a million calls can contact each other quickly, without much expenditure of time and

energy. This requires a great intellectual discipline, "an orchestration of knowledge," to use an expression of Professor Patrick Geddes; it demands foresight, hindsight and insight.

(b) *Administrative co-ordination*.—The second aspect of co-ordination is departmental or administrative, its purpose being to dovetail the various schemes into each other, so that no one will neutralize the good of others. All schemes, forming part of the plan, must move together in harmony; they must function as a whole, as do the parts of an automobile. Any maladjustment between the parts will hold the automobile rooted to the ground.

## 5. Evaluation of the plan

Evaluation of the plan, as it begins to take shape, is a vital aspect of planning. The plan may require to be modified in major or minor details; change in the national or international situation may necessitate alterations in the methods and goals. Some vested interests might get hold of schemes and may seek to serve their interests as against those of the nation. Administrative machinery may not find itself equal to the tasks. The ideals or objectives may be lost sight of. Co-ordination may be lacking. Some specialists may fall out. Some new ideas may emerge and make a new adjustment necessary. There may be ever so many causes that may interrupt the smooth working of the plan. There must, therefore, be some machinery by means of which it will be possible to keep a watch over the working of the plan. It will require experts and specialists to handle

the situation, to cut out nepotism or departmental favouritism, and reward earnestness and industry.

## 6. Planning the Plan

One of the most significant aspects of the plan is the planning of the plan itself. Official and non-official co-operation, finance, appreciation of the obstacles in the execution of the plan, publicity which creates enlightened public opinion and *esprit de corps* among the masses, division of labour, and various other problems will need to be handled by a central administrative planning authority that will serve as a watch-dog, always on the alert, handling each situation in a perfectly dispassionate manner, tolerating no interference of politicians and vested interests, brooking no obstruction from departments, punishing corruption swiftly and vigorously, publicising achievements of individuals and experts, preparing the nation for co-operation.

## Significance of planning in India

This is what is implied in planning. Not one Plan put forward in our country has shown evidence of acquaintance with these fundamental problems of planning, much less of the second part of our subject, which is synthesis of cultures. Synthesis, we have pointed out before, aims at alliance of science and machine with our culture in terms of the present-day needs of the nation. Science and machine, in order to be assimilated to India's ideals, will have to be divested of their anti-social uses, so that they shall not try to save life in retail

and kill it in war in wholesale. Science will have to be saved from its present task of annihilating the human race, and in this arduous task, India receives no guidance from any other country. The pre-Industrial culture of the West has died out, and science and machine are crushing out the indigenous cultures of the eastern countries. Japan was westernized to the hilt till the atomic bomb tragedy. China is in a state of transition, but her culture has little chance of survival with Russian Communism on one side and the American industrialism on the other. The leading Islamic countries have gone in wholesale for mechanization, discarding their fezes and purdahs and taking their lessons in efficiency from the storm-centres of the West. Science and machine are imposing a uniform culture-pattern over the whole world. The rich colourful variety is fast yielding place to uniformity. India's plan of synthesis of cultures must aim at saving her from unintelligent absorption into the non-descript cosmopolitanism of the mechanized milieu. She must retain the uniqueness of her culture based on spiritual values and yet keep abreast of the cataclysmic changes surging through the world, thus illustrating by her example the combination of a lofty spiritual vision with physical vigour. and playing a leading role in the counsels of nations.

### **Synchronization of science with planning**

This synchronization of science with planning requires an up-to-date knowledge of contributions of science and their effect on social life of the people. One

sociologist has listed one hundred and eighty changes brought about by the birth of radio ! The problem here is the use of science, so that every problem can be quickly, economically and efficiently solved in terms of the values we have achieved. Synchroniza-tion of science with our ideals and needs will shorten the cultural lag of centuries into a few years.

## 7. Prediction

Another equally important aspect of planning is the need of prediction or anticipation of change. A well-trained mind should be capable of seeing the parts as organically related to each other and there-fore revealing a purpose and a pattern. This capacity to understand the *gestalt* of the whole awakens the competency to predict. It is undoubtedly true that a mastery of social sciences, dealing with various aspects of social life, will be found to be of infinite value in this task. For, we must remember that the wars of to-day are fought and planned first in Institutes of Sociological and Geopolitical Research, not on village cricket grounds !

If India's responsibility is greater than that of any other country, her task is comparatively easier, since she has a culture, with well-defined values, an experience that is woven into the fabric of her life, and a vision that has remained undimmed for thousands of years. All that India needs is to change her garments or, to change the metaphor, build anew so that she will again become a *moksha-bhumi*, and not a charnel house that she is to-day. But such a reconstruction cannot just happen. It has to be

planned on scientific lines. With the present-day advances in social sciences, refinement of sociological techniques evolved by western countries, it should be possible to plan India's future intelligently and thus help her in the direction of her new life. India has known periods of social and cultural change, and the earliest contribution to the science of planning comes from the great sage of India, MANU, as Professor Edward Allsworth Ross, the doyen of American sociologists, wrote to the author some years ago.

### **The Means**

We have already outlined the objectives of planning in India. But we shall have to adopt appropriate means to make our goal a reality. It is to the consideration of these means that we shall now turn our attention.

It would be presumptuous on our part to deal with this question exhaustively, particularly when we have a national government in power and there exists the National Planning Committee, appointed by the Indian National Congress. We do not seek to anticipate their findings; the task of preparing a programme of an overall reconstruction of the nation does not fall within the purview of this treatise, and we shall content ourselves with submitting what we conceive to be the irreducible minimum for the achievement of our purpose. In the attainment of our goal, some of the following means will have to be adopted :

(a) In economic life, India will have to undertake conservation of her natural and human resources, regional planning, electrification of the nation,

modernization of her newly-built rural areas ; mechanized, co-operative agriculture ; large-scale but decentralized industrialization for cultural and strategical purposes ; decentralization of the megalopolitan cities ; nationalization of all the natural resources, land and industries ; abolition of all monopolies, Indian and foreign ; a new type of money, based on industrial economics, divested of all motive of profit ; judicious control of population, especially among the lower strata of society through education, higher standard of living and wide-spread instruction in spacing of children.

(b) This economic reconstruction can be undertaken by a government of the people, and when India does have it, we believe the federal form of the Swiss type will suit her particular genius and requirements better than any other. Revival of the *panchayats*, indirect franchise, joint electorates, Schools of Foreign Affairs, Diplomacy and Public Administration, and modernization of the land, air and naval forces will be found to be utterly indispensable for her status as a first-rate power.

(c) But all this requires preparation of the nation through education, and India should have a *national* system of education. By national we mean that type of education that will help India to be true to her destiny through resolving of all elements of conflict operating within her and attacking her from without. In this task, machine and science will be found to be of infinite value to India. India should press their contributions in every branch of human knowledge and group life, putting equal emphasis on scientific

and humanistic studies and on the essentials of Indian culture. This will involve considerable changes in the radio programmes of the present high-pressure and decentralization of broadcasting as a provincial subject, dedicated to the education of the nation and creation of enlightened public opinion. Our textbooks will need to be entirely rewritten. All mechanisms of education, formal and informal, need to be vitalized, nationalized.

(d) But in vain shall be all this reconstruction if India should lose her soul, if her spiritual and cultural values should be lost sight of in the fury of reconstruction of her material form. The cultural life of the masses so appallingly poor needs to be refreshed, reinvigorated, and this can only be accomplished through the quickening of the spiritual impulses of the common man. Adherence to formalistic aspects of religion has held India in thrall of ignorance and superstition. India's youth will need to be trained to get spiritual experience first-hand, and we can conceive of no better instruments for this task than inter-denominational *ashramas*, where experimentation with eternal verities will be a collective adventure.

It is not necessary to go into the sociological implications of these various means. We must content ourselves with only pointing the way, leaving it to the reader to pursue the subject further, both as a matter of intellectual interest and as national duty. But before we leave the subject here, there are a few aspects of it to which we should draw the readers' pointed attention.



Firstly, there is an organic relationship or inter-dependence between these various social objectives and means. Their value lies in interrelating what seem as separate or disjointed factors or elements. In the planning of a new India, we must see the situation as a whole rather than as a cluster of parts. All national planning must proceed on the fundamental principle of co-ordinating parts into a whole, of integrative specialized interests and atomic elements of social reality and dealing with forces and interests in association, with people, places, environments, work, political, economic and social institutions, culture, art, industry, religion, etc., as an integrated whole, of looking upon the entire structure of the nation as a joint activity. Thus, all these means stand together and will have to be undertaken simultaneously.

Secondly, these objectives and means are inevitable, since the time-spirit points in their direction. Any balking of their fulfilment will result sooner or later in an explosion.

Thirdly, they are in conformity with our national experience and ethos and lend themselves easily to adaptation, for, as we have seen already, India has made great contributions to exact sciences from time immemorial, known numerous periods of transition and discovered techniques of social and cultural change.

Finally, these objectives and means aim at shifting the emphasis from one isolated panacea to an all-round reconstruction of our national life. In this task, we must fight our battles on many fronts.

Progress is a multi-sided movement, not a linear achievement. It will be only after we have succeeded in putting these means into operation that we shall gain some results and a new India will come into being.

## II

With this explanation of all that is involved in planning, let us take up two concrete problems and see how we can tackle them.<sup>1</sup>

### Crime : Causes

Crime is one of the problems born of this clash of cultures, and it can no more be eliminated by passing laws than can the caste system be eradicated from our midst by political rhetoric! The sources of crime lie deep in the body and mind of the individual as well as in the society, and any attempt to solve the problem must take in both in their entirety and eliminate sources of friction. Sociologically speaking, crime is the result of breakdown between the various component parts in a situation : the natural environments, the cultural set-up and the man. Every group of people, from a primitive tribe or an advanced nation, must fortify itself and ensure its existence by a certain code of conduct which every member must accept and obey. Any deviation or failure to comply

<sup>1</sup> A much fuller treatment of the subject is given in the author's forthcoming volume on *Criminology for Indian Students*.

must be visited with punishment. All anti-social conduct is crime. The causes of crime should be sought for in these three component parts. A maladjustment between these three factors breaks out in social disorganization when the crime wave begins to rise. If we analyse the present-day social and political anarchy in the world, we shall find this disharmony between the three factors fundamental. Of course, a certain amount of maladjustment there is bound to be while man and his institutions are still struggling toward perfection. A complete adjustment would mean a utopia and that day is a long way off.

### **1. Effect of environments**

Environments and man are closely inter-related. Environments affect man through food, climate, seasons and temperature. Different types of climate give birth to different species of crime. Crime in warm countries is generally against person ; in cold countries, it is against property. In the warm countries, it is an impulsive act ; in the cold, as in Europe and America, it is a well laid out, scientifically executed, cold-blooded design. In warm countries, a slight provocation may bring flashing knives into the open ; in cold regions, it is gun and the pistol that decide fates, but the aim is taken with a calm hand, steady nerve and is planned ahead. Heavy alcoholism, meat-eating and sex-crime flourish in cold countries, where wintry blasts freeze up man's physical and emotional energies and send him scurrying around in quest of thrills and adventures. In tropical countries, such as India, climate retards

man's consumption of food, makes him mild and reduces considerably the incidence of crime. Heat has a decided effect on our blood cells, therefore on our thinking and acting processes. It has been observed that during high winds, suicides, murders and misdemeanours increase to many times the normal in some cold countries. Dark, cloudy days are depressing, while sunny days evoke sunny smiles. A very large amount of crime, therefore, can be easily understood in terms of latitude and longitude and of changes in thermometer. Climate and crime have a close relationship.

## 2. The cultural set-up

The second factor in our scheme is culture, the social environments, the totality of the social organization, with all its instruments and institutions along which flows the life of the group. The major social institutions are education, economics, family, government, religion, arts and sciences, work, play, etc. These institutions must work in harmony or else disorder, cultural lag will result, ultimately ending in crime.

(a) In technologically advanced countries, new inventions add to unemployment ; yet, industrialists insist on long hours for work. The academic economics of the last century, of "rugged individualism," based on false hypothesis of supply and demand, continue to poison the foundations of social order throughout the world leading to various problems and wars. Concentration of capital implies inadequate distribution of wealth and that gives rise to

social conflict. "Economic injustice and crime are obverse and reverse of the same coin." Science and social conscience must keep even pace. The lag between the two is responsible for much of the crime in the world. (b) Concentration of population in large cities is another cause of increase in anti-social behaviour. Life in a large city is not intimate. People "brush" against each other and pass on. Large cities throughout the world are "dugouts" for crime. Wealth flaunts its fortune before the impotent poor; it excites envy. Cities give safe harbour to perpetrators of crime, whose identity is lost in the crowd. (c) To no small extent, corrupt politics favour crime. High pressure groups, lobbyists, capitalists and industrialists know how to use governments for their own gains. The average individual is an insignificant worm caught up in the tentacles of such gigantic interests. All the political and economic panaceas are born of this frustration of man. (d) Institutionalized religion has failed to control the mass of mankind in its anti-social tendencies. The average individual cannot distinguish between religion as a way of life and the religious machinery. Few people "live" religion; the vast mass are satisfied with ritualism. Blessing given to bombers raining death and terror over innocent women and children is a common phenomenon in the West. In the East, people are a little more humane. They recite mantrams over buffaloes and goats that are ready for slaughter before the altar. The hypnotism of the spoken word lasts while they are close to the pulpit or near the idol in the temple. Outside the

sacred precincts, the most devout can be the most devilish. (e) Modern sport also encourages crime. Little is known to the reader of the sports news or to the spectator of the games in the large stadiums about the inside "racketeering" and box-office receipts. Racing whets the appetite for quick profits. Boxing, bull-fighting, wrestling, fox-hunting, are matters of religion with some people. Thirst for blood in sports projects itself into our social life, and there need be no wonder that life should be held so cheap by some men who take to crime or that there should be wars. (f) Movie, the mechanized entertainment, adds its quota to crime. It glorifies sex immoralities, flaunts human flesh, encourages disregard for law, puts virtue on the defence, and shows it to be fighting a losing battle. The movie-makers "sell" their pictures to the public with unfailing, hypnotizing propaganda. Young men and women are allured by the dare-devil stunts staged on the screen. Gangsters are bred in the cinemas and in the by-lanes of large cities.

### 3. Man

The third factor in the social situation is the individual himself. While the problem of transmission of mental traits to the offspring through the germ-plasm has still to be solved, the science of biology maintains that tendencies are transmitted. A child born of alcoholic parents will have a certain craving for alcohol, but this, by careful upbringing, may be offset. Weak children, born of weak parents, are known to show greater tendencies to crime than

those of normal people. Glands also play a part in the formation of human personality and its expression. Deficiency of pineal gland is known to produce subnormal mentality. Excessive supply of adrenals produces aggressiveness ; absence of iodine in the system leads to certain forms of cretinism. A large prostate gland causes sexual abnormality.

But man is much more than his biological tendencies, urges or instincts. He is an intelligent being, endowed with mind. Manu gives four fundamental social forces that put man into active touch with the life around him. These he calls, *kama*, *artha*, *dharma* *moksha*, which mean, desire, action, thought and aspiration for self-fulfilment.<sup>1</sup> These psychological needs of man can only be fulfilled in association with fellow-men. Indeed, without this contact with humanity, he would remain an articulate animal at best. There is always an explosion whenever any of these human urges is interfered with. "Balked disposition," to use Hobhouse's expression, is an impending social liability. Disharmony between these natural and cultural environments and man is bound to result in crime.

Thus, crime is the result of a series of causes, not one cause. Before any one is adjudged a criminal, it is the duty of society to understand the situation thoroughly, analyse the effects of climate, food, heredity, education, family upbringing, neighbourhood, play-ground influences, economic and political

<sup>1</sup> W. I. Thomas, one of the leading sociologists of America mentions four "wishes" or "urges"—the wish for new experience, the wish for response, the wish for security, and finally, the wish for recognition.

conditions, religious controls and then devise appropriate means of reclaiming him. Not unoften, the so-called criminal has been kicked into crime by a cruel conspiracy of circumstances.

### **Crime in relation to place and time**

Every group of people must control anti-social conduct of its members. Social solidarity cannot be maintained if centrifugal tendencies in man are not properly controlled. Crime varies with time, place and the group. What is crime with a group at one time becomes a meritorious act at another. A man is punished with death for committing a murder in his community ; he is hailed as hero if he deals death on large scale in the enemy's camp. One group insists on monogamy ; another considers possession of a harem as a mark of royalty. One group punishes ordinary theft severely ; another group encourages it and considers it a virtue. Folkways and *mores* vary with each group ; crime is what the community has decided it to be.

### **Detection of crime**

Detection of crime varies with the nature of crime. A night-hawk watching for the enemy is the acme of achievement in a primitive type of society. In the modern world, governments need fast gun-boats, aeroplanes and armed militia to beat the criminal at his game. A large footprint was a good clue not long ago ; to-day, the finest criminological laboratories will capture with a mere finger-print or a heart-beat. As men have refined techniques of their criminal



operations and expanded their spheres of activity, the controlling agencies have tried to keep pace by developing equally effective methods of detection and control.

The scientific precision and certainty of detection of crime have reached amazing proportions to-day. There is not a crime to which a clue is not left behind by the perpetrator in one form or another. It is therefore the first axiom of training in criminological investigation that there is no such thing as a *perfect crime*. A perfect crime would be one in which all the clues are absolutely erased by the criminal. That is physically impossible these days. A trained detective will look at a case from a thousand and one angles and will find clues that will take him straight to the criminal even if he has crossed continents, spanned the seas and is hiding in a cave in the remotest part of the earth. It may take some time but the success is assured nevertheless. The present-day technique of detection employs almost uncanny powers of intuition, with scientific instruments as its unfailing allies.

### **Crime and science**

The criminal gets his training in using scientific instruments in his operations right in the environment in which he lives. The whole culture of science and machine is based on conflict as we have seen. Science places instruments in the individual's hands and the implicit conflict assumes an overt shape. Thus, in the United States of America this social maladjustment breaks out in crime, while in Europe it assumes

the form of war. The criminal of to-day presses science into service. He uses every device that science places at his disposal ; the police and detective agencies have to keep pace with him, and the race goes on. Let us take bank robbery as an illustration : Robinson writes : "From 1885 to 1914 the approved method of looting a bank was to crack its vaults in the dead of night. During that thirty-year period a battle waged, nip and tuck, between the safe-makers and the safe-breakers. The old key safe had surrendered long before to the skeleton key. Then came the combination lock on the front of the safe. The cracksman retaliated with drill and gun-powder. *Ergo*, the safe-makers put the combination on the back of the safe-door. The vault-breaker merely lengthened his drill and chose a mightier explosive. Chilled steel came into use, defying both drills and powder. Now the bank robbers waylaid an employee who knew the combination, and tore it from him by torture. Safe manufacturers countered it with the time-lock. Nitroglycerine was the answer to all that nonsense. Next came the safe with screw door. Well, that was offset by acetylene torch. Finally, the safe-makers invented a screw-door, drill-proof, time-locked, concrete reinforced, electrically-wired vault that would ring bells, blow whistles, call out police if a drill so much as leaned against its walls. Balked, the safe-robbers took to holding up banks in broad daylight."

#### **Punishment : retaliation**

Crime has been punished in a variety of ways. "Eye for eye and tooth for tooth" has enjoyed a

religious sanctity and imperativeness with us. *Retaliation* has so far formed the basis of social treatment of crime. All wrong-doing has been visited with reprisal. Not a little of human ingenuity has been spent on inventing mechanisms of exquisite torture. Slow death on the breaking wheel, boiling alive in water or oil, burning at the stake, immuration tearing the body by elephants pulling in opposite directions, exposing to fire or slow baking, flaying alive, sewing up in animal skin, nailing on the cross, a cup of hemlock—these and many other forms of punishment have been freely used to get rid of the criminal and the crime. The greater the agonising cry of the sufferer, the greater has been the sadistic joy of society that saw its redemption in the annihilation of the offender.

In recent times, emphasis has been placed on scientific study of crime and appropriate methods of “punishment” or treatment, though decapitations and guillotines in public squares in some of the western countries was not uncommon long before the war. It is undoubtedly a far cry from the stake and the breaking wheel to the modern electrocution, firing by squad or the lethal chamber. The former were slow, public performances, carried out for the delectation of the public and the deterrence of the probable offender ; the latter are expeditious, carried out in the quiet and privacy of a chamber, thus eliminating pain and publicity as much as possible. Retaliation for wrong still prevails. Vengeance still forms the foundation of penal law. Reprisal, not reformation, is its guiding principle.

## Repression

Repression has been the inevitable and logical concomitant of retaliation. Crime must not only be punished but it must also be prevented. Methods of prevention have shared the barbarity of retaliation. Torture and intimidation have held humanity in their grip for hundreds of years. Till only recently the Government of Japan used to punish people for "thinking dangerous thoughts."

## Reformation

The third method of dealing with crime is reformation. This is comparatively a recent technique, as far as the western world is concerned. But man has still a rough road to go. The evolution of a penal system, not based on *a priori* legalistic assumptions is bound to be very slow.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Beccaria, an Italian, was the first to propound reformation as the reasonable motive of "punishment." He propounded his theory in a pamphlet, *Crime and Punishment*, published in Milan in 1764. He challenged repression, and put up a vigorous plea for reformation. We come across the same plea for reformation in England about the same time. John Howard was made Sheriff of Bedford in 1773, and was placed in charge of the jail in which John Bunyan had written his *Pilgrim's Progress* one hundred years earlier. During the sixteen years of his service, Howard visited every country in Europe that made its jails accessible to visitors. He studied every penal system that he could, and advocated reform of the system prevailing in his country. The year 1776 saw the birth of the Philadelphia Society for Relieving Distressed Prisoners, organised by William Penn, who himself had been jailed in England. This Society became the parent of penal reform institutions in the United States of America. The whole history of penology is illumined by these three persons—Beccaria, Howard and Penn, whose labours have lightened human misery in all parts of the world.

**Picture of a prison**

The average citizen has a fairly correct picture of a prison and what goes on inside. Enclosed spaces, with high stone walls, cells with steel bars and locks, with vermin for company ; hard and rough floor with insufficient bed covering, filthy and inadequate toilet facilities, used by large queues of prisoners, insufficient, non-nutritious food, inadequate provision for bathing, solitary confinement, bell-bars, locked hands behind the back, unsupported squatting on knees, hanging by arms, rigorous labour for long hours, heavy penalties for small infringements of rules, herding of all types of criminal together, harsh supervision under hard-boiled, brutalized wardens—these are but a few distinguishing marks of ordinary prisons to-day in India and other parts of the world. Books, magazines and newspapers are denied to the prisoners ; there is little religious training or intelligent entertainment. A hell on earth, where all “ who enter leave hope behind.” But the situation is changing. Social conscience of man is awakening and study of criminology points to the various fronts on which the battle has to be fought. There is an insistence on controlling the forces that culminate in crime, and prisons are built with a view to maintain health of the inmates as well as facilitate their reclamations. The conditions of living aim at fostering right attitudes ; “ punishment ” is made to fit the crime. Above all, a definite effort is made to recondition the personality of the criminal so as to reabsorb him into society on his release.

**Present-day reforms : penitentiary, not a prison**

To-day, the word prison is discarded for penitentiary, and the prisoners are inmates. There is a demand that the cells should not give the impression of being cages for human beings. They should be kept clean ; there should be provision for physical comfort. There should be good supply of water ; beds should be neat. According to new attitudes towards the criminal, who is a social misfit, every new entrant should be given a thorough physical examination on admission. All hindrances to normal functioning of health should be quickly removed. Medical service should be regular and efficient. The inmate should feel round him an atmosphere of understanding and helpfulness. He should be encouraged to see that his action is responsible for his presence in a "pen," that he has wronged society and "not played the game," and that he may soon go out into a friendly world if he will only make himself acceptable.

**Vocational guidance**

The aim of "punishment" now is to recondition the prisoner's personality. In some countries, where the Sciences of Penology and Criminology have made sufficient progress so as to influence governmental policies, some of the techniques indicated here have been adopted. The prisoner is trained in regular habits with a view to establishing harmony in his life. Bathing, exercise, regular times for food, hard but interesting work, and sufficient rest, these

form the daily routine. A major part of the day is devoted to the acquiring of skill in some industry or handicraft in which he has already some skill or finds a new interest. An expert in vocational guidance is always at hand to help in this work. This intensifies his interest in his work, and he puts his best into it. This increasing sense of usefulness along right lines and self-sufficiency gives him an added assurance that he will find a place when he goes out into the world. There is a great variety of occupations to select from. He can take up automobile repairing, cooking, printing, masonry, radio-operating, plumbing, weaving, carpentry, etc. The prison has a farm attached to it, sometimes as large as 500 acres. This gives a living contact with nature, discipline of hard work, the advantage of outdoor employment, the joy of seeing the slow process of growth in the plant world. Poultry and dairy-farming are added attractions. The income from the work of the "inmate" is remitted to his wife and children, so that they are not exposed to want and suffering.

The basic value of work is that it reconditions the prisoner not only physically, but also in his social and mental outlook on life ; it equips him for a new and reformed mode of living on his return to the world.

### **Price of comforts**

Such prisons are not "comfortable hotels." Every comfort has to be deserved by hard work and is retained on condition of creditable conduct. At the end of the day, the prisoner has worked hard and

earned a night's rest. Indeed, under this system the prisoner works as hard, if not harder, than under the regime of revengeful punishment, but the basic interest is different. Under the old system, he is a bond slave ; he works under the lash of a whip. Under the new system, he has his own interests at heart. He is here to recover the lost ground, and this intensifies his efforts at self-improvement.

### **Discipline**

The problem of discipline is solved by encouraging prisoners to assume responsibility for their own behaviour. They form welfare leagues for themselves. Within limits they make their own rules of conduct and punish violators. This procedure stimulates the prisoners to develop the social and self-governing spirit that is needed in ordinary group life. A very small percentage of prisoners abuse the privilege of free movement and escape. But the sense of having wronged the friends left behind, who would suffer as a result of their escape, makes most of their return of their own accord after having been abroad for some time !

### **Indeterminate sentence**

The system of the indeterminate sentence is now being widely used, and it has been found very helpful in introducing a certain amount of self-imposed discipline. The policy of prescribing in advance a definite period of imprisonment is discarded, and in its place the sentence indicates the minimum and maximum periods, enforceable in accordance with



the criminal's conduct. As soon as he shows that he is prepared to co-operate and lead a socially-responsible life, the period of his sentence is correspondingly decreased. This system of indeterminate sentence individualizes treatment of each offender, gives him an opportunity to show results by his behaviour, develops an abiding sense of self-respect, and helps him to acquire a good occupational efficiency before leaving the prison.

### **Adult probation**

Adult probation is another device of individualized treatment. It is generally given to the first offender, who is not entirely anti-social, and who has infringed a very minor social regulation. The person on probation is saved the life-long disgrace of having been a prisoner and unwholesome contact with the "toughs." He reports every month to the police, pays the fine in instalments prescribed by the Court, and makes appropriate restitution to the persons he has wronged.

### **Parole**

But an offender who is admitted on indeterminate sentence and has proved by his behaviour his worthiness to go out into the world, is released on parole. He is given an opportunity to try out his adjustment with the group, under official supervision and guidance. The parole officer helps him to find the type of work in which he received his training. The government or some philanthropic organization sometimes helps with a little loan to give him a start.

The state stands by him and is ready to help in his honest efforts to stand on his legs. The process of adjustment is always slow, and there are many chances of slipping back. But the man who is trying to help himself deserves to be helped.

This then, is the new treatment of crime. It is denuded of retaliation and repression and aims at reformation. The "offender" has to be regained to the society. In his sinning against society or *vice versa*, both are losers. Both must make amends to each other. Co-operation, not conflict, is the law of social life.

### **The criminal in the making**

But it is being increasingly realized that it is better to prevent crime than to cure it. Crime must be caught at its source ; the criminal must be reconditioned when he has a supple body and mind. A juvenile delinquent of to-day is the confirmed criminal of to-morrow. It is on this young offender that society must concentrate its attention.

The individual, condemned as a confirmed criminal in his later years, receive his initiation into crime in his earlier years. Had the group tried to help him at that time, he would not be behind the bars in later years. Prevention of crime is as imperative a duty of society as is education or care of the sick and the wounded. In the case of the young delinquent, those causes that lead to crime are beyond his control, while a little attention on part of the society may be quite enough to put him on the right track. A tainted heredity with tendencies to certain forms of

crime ; an inadequate home ; insufficient vocational education and religious training, pernicious promptings in an evil environment—these form the fertile soil for juvenile delinquency.

### **An “inadequate home”**

The inadequate home may be described as a home broken by death ; home rent asunder by divorce, desertion, or separation ; home in the grip of chronic poverty ; home in which parents are too busy with midnight parties, teas, cards, to give sufficient attention to the welfare of the children ; home in which the parents are shiftless ; home in which parents are given to drugs or vice ; home in which wealth and luxury have induced irresponsible habits in the children ; home with parents maladjusted to the complex life in urban areas ; home in which parents have no training in parenthood or in scientific principles of child guidance. No child that has grown up in any one of the homes described above will be a normal personality in later years. He may succeed in keeping clear of crime, but the tendencies are firmly planted in the mind and the body, and may burst forth at the slightest provocation.

### **Unhealthy neighbourhood**

Add to this inadequacy of home life, the unhealthy influences of streets and by-lanes in large cities, the inadequate provision for outdoor games and sports for children, the harmful amusements operated for profit, the unrestricted sale of liquor, the suffocating atmosphere of the sweat shops, and we have the

stage set for the general atmosphere of disorganization for both the children and the adults.

### **Reclamation of the juvenile delinquent**

It is only the healthy influence of primary groups, such as home, neighbourhood and school, that can aid the growth of wholesome social attitudes. Every child can be helped in this direction in his early years. Co-operative, sacrificial, generous attitudes of adults are as much the result of early environment as the individualistic, selfish and acquisitive attitudes. The juvenile delinquent gets all his impetus from his environment, his ability to combat anti-social promptings is not so great as that of an adult. A juvenile delinquent is a potential criminal calling for reclamation, and not for vindictive reprisal. The reclamation of the juvenile delinquent is based on the same principles as those of the adult. Reformatories are established and they operate on a few fundamental principles. These are that the delinquent can be reformed, that reformation can be facilitated by the delinquent's co-operation, that reformation must be through education; that business or industrial training is the basic need of the delinquent. The treatment of the delinquent must be individualized and he must be given every assistance to reorganize his personality.

### **The reformatory**

The reformatory is more or less a boarding school. Every new case is thoroughly looked into. The physician, the psychiatrist, the psychologist and the

sociologist study the case of every new-comer and give their full reports. Each case is individually treated. Great emphasis is placed on physical fitness. It is strongly maintained that socially destructive tendencies have their roots in physical degeneracy. Vigorous physical exercise in specially equipped gymnasiums, hot and cold baths, are a part of the regular routine. There is a plentiful supply of wholesome food ; movies are frequently shown to the youngsters ; there are large collections of books on arts and sciences ; music is also taught.

### **Vocational training**

The inmates are first offenders. They are given vocational training of various types. On their release, some join army, navy, mercantile marine, police ; some enter hotels as cooks, waiters, bell-boys ; others become shoemakers, barbers, carpenters, miners, tailors, steelworkers, printers, etc. The indeterminate sentence quickens the process of self-improvement and after some parole the trainees are safely absorbed into society.

### **Separate courts**

Separate Courts for juvenile delinquents is another method. These courts are unlike the regular court chambers ; they resemble private conference-rooms. Women, acting as referees or judges in girls' cases, have proved very successful. In cases where it is realized that parental neglect is responsible for the children's guilt, the parents are called into the domestic relations court.

**Self-Government**

The self-government inside the reformatories is another way. The youngsters hold their own courts, and mete out punishment which is chiefly in terms of deprivation of certain privileges. This "junior republic" idea puts the youth on their own responsibility, and they learn social responsibilities through personal experiences in group life.

**The School**

It is now maintained that one of the functions of the public schools is to segregate mentally defective children and keep them under institutional supervision. Such a procedure would be much better than allowing them to be released from supervision at an early age and let them drift into delinquency. If the public schools would keep the mentally deficient and other probables under supervision until such time as they show themselves capable of adjustment, the problem of juvenile delinquency would be largely solved. Thus, the school might take care of a certain number of behaviour-problem youths.

**Child Guidance Clinic**

Child guidance clinic is another institution called into being to aid in this reclamation. It receives "problem children" and gives them medical, psychological, psychiatric and sociological attention. It has been found that problem children have problem parents; that is, the parents have been failing to meet the needs of their children. These clinics,

therefore, prescribe treatment for parents, so that they change their attitudes and relations to their own children.

### **Other necessary steps**

Thus, control of crime, in its adult and juvenile forms, involves a reconditioning of human personality, the environments and the social structure. It requires institutions and agencies that can satisfy the basic human urges and needs and eliminate causes of conflict in a dynamic social order. This whole subject of crime has to be understood anew. We shall need to re-write our penal codes, emphasise sociological jurisprudence, adopt objective, scientific techniques of detection of crime with a view to minimise all uncertainty in detection, evidence and arraignment, establish criminological laboratories, improve the police and give it a thorough grounding in social aspects of their duties, rebuild prisons so that they shall be houses for rebuilding of broken bodies and minds, and not where stray, casual delinquents are confirmed into hard-boiled criminals, and train social welfare workers who will be masters in the science and art of reclamation of human personalities. It is through understanding the causes that give rise to social breakdown, through evolving institutions, mechanisms and intelligent personal and public opinion that we shall be able to resolve this problem, as any other problem. This whole subject of crime forms the contents of a new social science, Criminology. The youngest of sciences, Criminology is most impatient with the whole procedure of handling the

problem. It throws overboard all arguments of vindictiveness and punishment as relics of barbarism. It brushes aside all *a priori* legalistic assumptions and moral codes of the age now passing out of sight, and takes a firm stand for reclamation of the criminal, who is only a creature of social forces working in and around him, who is a part of the larger life we call community, and who has only gone astray in antagonistic environments.

In India, we are witnessing a social location on a large scale. The stage is set for an epidemic of crises which will take the form of famines, communal squabbles, crime on a large scale civil war. To stem the tide of this social disorganization, which will probably be a long-drawn out process, should one of the primary duties of those who still entertain some love for what India stands for.

### III

#### **Education**

Let us take another segment of our national life, education, and see how we can plan our overall attack on the problem, utilize science and machine in its service, so that it will serve the needs of our country in the present age. Now, education is intended to educe, to bring out the inherent capacities of the child—physical, emotional, mental, moral and spiritual—so that it shall grow to the fullest stature and be a well-integrated individual. From the standpoint of the group, education is an agency for



transmission of the cultural heritage of that group to the safe-keeping of its younger generation. Hence our educational reconstruction will have to reconcile the claims of the individual and the nation through the media of science and machine. How shall we proceed ?

### **University towns**

Our first task will be to remove the institutions of higher learning to small towns, built specially to serve the needs of these institutions. Our present universities, located in urban areas, draw our young men and women into a life of conflict. The purpose of the ancient *ashrama* ideal of India was to isolate the teacher and the student from the distractions, strains and stresses that are inevitable in a life lived among the crowds. The modern megalopolitan cities deflect both the teacher and the student from their respective duties, so that education is no longer concerned with service of the nation or conservation of social values, but has become a problem in pathology.

### **Education and national problems**

In educational institutions, our efforts should be concentrated on making use of those mechanisms that science places at our disposal, so that we may be able to eliminate conflict from every phase of social life. One of the social objectives of education, for instance, may be the promotion of social and communal harmony. We must go about it scientifically, and not be content with passing resolutions on platforms or listening to politicians. Their whims and fancies

and pacts do not alter human passions and prejudices which form the raw material of history.

### Movie

In our task of bringing about national unity, we shall find the movie of inestimable value. With its assistance, we can dramatize India's national evolution and make it visible to the eye. It will undoubtedly be a colossal undertaking to reconstruct India's history from ancient times to to-day, with the slow but steady march of her life. A pictorial representation of the pageantry of Indian civilization, of its manifold achievements and set-backs, of its power and purpose, will appeal to the young and the old, to the illiterate and the educated, to the peasant and the prince. It will give to the younger generation a vision of India's grandeur and uniqueness, a synoptic survey of her onward march through the ages, a glimpse of the majestic purpose projected by her Maker. Such a vision made to live once more before our eyes would be a source of great spiritual enlightenment, a veritable feast of beauty. One such movie, thrown on the screen in our villages, cities, schools, colleges and universities, will be equal to thousands of books and learned papers, to thousands of lectures by politicians and propagandists on need for communal unity. Ours is an 'eye-minded' age, if a mixed metaphor may be permitted.

The movie could also be utilized for showing the latest advancements in agriculture, industry, town-planning, sanitation and various other nation-building departments. Instead of allowing our masses to

indulge in the ceaseless visual debauch of witnessing shows made in alien moulds, we can make use of this very helpful scientific device in building up a new and intelligent India.

### **Radio**

The movie must be synchronized with the radio. The radio is a powerful agent of education in modern times, and it should be of equal assistance in the stupendous task of disseminating Indian ideals and general useful knowledge to the young generation in school and to the illiterate ignorant millions. One receiving set in each village would do the work of a dozen teachers or experts. We can educate the entire nation in a few years with radio and movie functioning simultaneously in the class-room and the village temple. Sargent's grandiose calculations of thirty and forty years can be squeezed into five, if we go about the problem scientifically. One thousand stations in the United States broadcast class-room programmes to which hundreds of thousands of classes are keyed up, with the movie functioning at the same time. This synchronization will, as one can easily see, minimize very considerably the problem of preparing teachers as well as the time and cost elements. A radio set will be a willing, inexpensive, effective instrument of service. One set can substitute many teachers. It can revive the corporate life of the village, give a national and world outlook to our masses and make them intelligent citizens of our country. Communal conflicts and social isolations, which have penetrated the villages, will be arrested

in their progress. Till the interim government came to the helm of national affairs, the centralized control of broadcasting in our country made AIR an adjunct of the British Broadcasting Corporation and an agency of propaganda, not education.

### **Education of the "whole" man**

Our next step will be to deal with the student as a whole. Social harmony depends upon the integration attained by the individual. Therefore, in addition to training in some scientific and vocational subjects, we shall emphasise humanistic studies. A broad, general education is a dire need of the age. In every advanced country, it is being increasingly realized that the present debacle in civilization is not a little due to neglect of social sciences, which are so vitally significant for the development of a consistent, integrated personality and for preservation of group values. India is fortunately still alive to the value of her cultural heritage, and instruction in its essentials must form a major plank in her educational programmes. Study of social sciences is indispensable for preparation for the new age. The nineteenth century was devoted to the development of natural sciences ; the twentieth belongs to social sciences.

Henry A. Wallace, a great thinker of the age, defines education of the whole man thus : " Science, economics, politics and international affairs move with great speed. . . . It is essential also for our teachers to realize that their object is to build well-rounded 'whole human beings' and not over-specialized human beings. . . . I know the time has

come at some stage in the educational process to emphasise the synthetic rather than the analytic approach to knowledge. . . . The general welfare philosophy, without turning its back on modern machines, nevertheless raises the question more and more as to the nature of life itself. Undoubtedly more attention will be given in the future to the biological sciences, to anthropology, to psychology and to those types of economics, sociology, political science, philosophy, ethics and theology which endeavour to look at man as a co-ordinated human being, not co-ordinated merely in body, mind, feeling and soul, but co-ordinated with his fellow human beings. In brief, education must be made to serve the cause of the whole man. By whole man I mean man as representing a co-ordination of the following aspects : (1) The economic aspect. Man as he endeavours individually and collectively to make a living. (ii) The social and political aspect. Man as he develops social institutions and tries to work out efficient systems of Government. (iii) The sexual aspect. (iv) The artistic aspect. Man as a creator and appreciator of beauty. (v) The religious aspect. Man as a being who is always reaching out beyond all that he has hitherto known.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Need for a new Dharma Shashtra**

In this task of controlling the conflict of cultures and aiding in the renewed incarnation of the spirit of India, education can play a very important

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, Henry A., *Paths to Plenty*, pp. 95-96, Washington D. C., 1938.

role. Only with its aid can we prepare a new generation of young men and women who shall place love for, and service of, the motherland above consideration of all earthly honour and glory, and this supreme task can only be discharged by giving the recognition and status to social sciences as is done to the natural sciences, by reorienting them in terms of our national character and needs of to-day. Study of *Geography* should not be merely a science of the natural phenomenon for purposes of using nature's gifts as commercial commodities but as a science of natural, ecological environments bearing close relationship to the making of human personalities and social order. *Biology* should be reoriented to reveal the basic human hungers and appetites the satisfaction of which is of primary importance in building up a strong, healthy, wholesome nation. *Anthropology* and *Ethnology* should make us conscious of our diverse racial inheritance, teach us tolerance for each other's customs and traditions, facilitate adjustment and eliminate communal antagonisms and animosities. *Psychology* should be lifted out the laboratory tests and mathematical calculations in which the erudite seem to revel so much in these days of abstractions, and made to reveal the processes of evolving a general will in and through which the nation may express itself effectively, in both its individual and collective aspects. *Statistics* should be something more than a science of measuring our secular needs ; it should reveal the social trends, the vital channels of social life, and the organic unity of the component parts of

the social whole. *Ethics and Esthetics* should initiate us into the secret of harmony in nature and man. Finally, *Religion and Philosophy* should introduce us to the mystery of life itself through reverential contacts with the minds and experiences of the Elect of the human race. These subjects should be taught in our educational institutions, not as mere hair-splitting of doctrines of theology, so dear to the heart of the fanatic and the pundit but as arts and sciences of venturing into the realm of the Unknown and the Unknowable, where alone man may experience the soul of Truth, Goodness and Beauty.

These are the basic social studies representing facts of life with which man must work. With their aid, he should approach study of *History*, so that the vast panorama of man's upward ascent from the level of the brute shall inspire him and he will see the working out of the destiny of our Motherland and the human race. *Educational theory and practice* should concentrate on equipping the younger generation in the fundamentals of Indian culture, in giving vocational training to the students to make them useful and creative citizens of the social commonwealth, and not merely economic hands toiling to support what we euphemistically call education. *Economics* should emphasise the human values, the shame and degradation of unemployment, of poverty, of low wages, poor housing, pressure of population, and show the method of remedying these old wrongs, improving public health, offering security to the citizens of the nation. *Politics* must be re-written in

terms of our age-old experience, western science and institutions providing only starting points for purposes of comparative study. One of the greatest banes of our life has been the undue emphasis we place on the pathology of politics. We must cease to consider the state as the be-all and end-all of our existence. Society is greater than the state and nation-building is not possible with mere passing of laws or changing the colour of the rulers. We must cease to mistake the cunning of vote-catching for competency to rule. *Law* must also change its garments. It can only avoid the Dickenson indictment, "The law is an ass," by development of an integrated outlook, a synthetic vision that can see the forces and factors that go into the making of new folkways and *mores*. Sociological Jurisprudence is a crying need of our country. Our legal institutions belong to the eighteenth not to the twentieth century.

### **Indian approach**

It is needless to say that our approach to all these subjects must be Indian. Exact sciences are international and know no frontiers; but social sciences and arts, as India has developed them, will alone serve her. Indeed, the Western social sciences have come up against certain deadlocks for which they are seeking keys that India alone can provide. India can make a unique contribution by demonstrating the application of her age-old experience and wisdom to her national life to-day and by being true to herself. The rapid advancement of industrialization is sending



resounding blows through the whole social fabric of India, and it is the primary duty of every educational institution to see to it that India does not enter upon that type of social chaos in which the world is engulfed to-day.

### **Other reforms**

We shall have to introduce many other reforms to bring our education into line with the needs of the age. Decentralization of our universities, so that every college will be free to conduct its own examinations and grant its own degrees ; abolition of the so-called charters issued by the Central Government which fetter all experimentation in education ; decentralization of the matriculation examination and making it a concern of the high schools, so that the clerical establishment of the Director of Public Instruction will no longer dictate policies ; abolition of the so-called Provincial and Imperial cadres of services through which the Central and the Provincial Governments control education ; appointment of Vice-Chancellors and Directors of Public Instruction on basis of specialized knowledge of the problems of education confronting a backward country like India, and not merely efficiency in administration or in carrying on party-politics and intrigues within the walls of institutions of learning : these are some of the reforms urgently needed if Indian education is to make any headway in the near future. The situation is very dark and depressing at present.

This brings our discussion to a close. The ground covered has been extensive indeed, but that was necessitated by the nature of the subject. And yet, we have only succeeded in scratching the surface of the problem, for every aspect of life has an ancestry, every problem a history, and unless we understand these, as well as the world experience and our national needs, planning can have no meaning in India. That India shall conserve her culture, save her ethos from disintegration, canalise her constructive genius along right lines and thus give a lead to the world that awaits her Word of Power is the hope with which this volume has been attempted, the purpose to which it is dedicated. For "this is the night the ages waited for."



## OPINIONS

### MANU : A STUDY IN HINDU SOCIAL THOUGHT

U.S.A.

I have gone over *Manu* and consider it a decided success. I had no idea that the system of *Manu* could be so rationally interpreted as you have interpreted it. It seems to me *Manu* represents a pretty advanced stage of constructive thought from the point of view of both psychology and of sociology. This system appears to be one of the earliest instances of social planning. Furthermore, I want to felicitate you on the very pruned and choice English in which you have set your book. At no point have I noticed a possibility of improvement.—E. A. ROSS, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

Dr. Motwani has performed a very considerable service in giving his interpretation of the social thought of his native land in a form which is, both interesting and intelligible to the Western mind. Please convey to him my congratulations.—CHARLES A. ELLWOOD, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, Duke University ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

I have read *Manu* and enjoyed it very much. I have always felt that western scholarship needed more of the type of interpretation of eastern thought which this book represents. I found it informing and thought-provoking. . . . I trust that the scholar who wrote this book will continue to do more of the same kind of writing.—ELLSWORTH FARIS, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Chicago ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

I have read *Manu* with a great deal of interest and consider that you have made a very, very valuable contribution to social theory in the elucidation of the laws of the ancient Hindus.—J. P. LICHTENBERGER, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

I have found it stimulating and informing. It is valuable particularly because it brings before American readers an account of Hindu social theory in a way that has not been made available before. It is a contribution of importance to our sociological literature.—E. S. BOGARDUS, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Southern California ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

I read it through with a great deal of interest. It is in my opinion an extremely useful instrument for American sociologists. . . . It is well documented and certainly expresses in clear style the significance of Hindu social theory in terms of modern sociological concepts. It seems to me that you have been unusually successful in accomplishing this. The book should be of great value to all American sociologists who are interested in the comparative study of theory.—F. STUART CHAPIN, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, University of Minnesota ; Past President, American Sociological Society.*

## OPINIONS

I find your volume an exceedingly valuable contribution because it relates modern sociological thought to Hindu social theory. Would that we could have more of such studies in every country in the world. I hope that you may be able to continue your research in the sociological field to bring to the West some of the rich material which is available in the East.—JEROME DAVIS, *Professor of Practical Philanthropy, Yale University.*

Some little time back I was looking for writings which would bring out clearly and from sociological viewpoint the character of certain Indian doctrines and codes. I do regret that at that time I did not have your work available and I am glad to have it now because it just fulfils this requirement.—R. M. MACIVER, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, Columbia University, New York.*

We sociologists in America will welcome this little book as an addition to the meagre stock of authentic scientific social analysis by Hindus of their classic literature. This work offers an interesting example of the interweaving of the western sociological concepts and terminology with Hindu materials. Indeed this interweaving is very skilfully done in "Manu." . . . I am impressed with the richness and variety of thought embodied in this so-called Code of Manu. . . Let me congratulate you on a worthwhile piece of pioneering work intelligently done. I shall hope to hear of further additions to scholarship from your study.—ARTHUR J. TODD, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.*

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for a copy of your *Manu, A Study in Hindu Social Theory*, so graciously sent me. It interested me so much that I read it at one sitting. You are to be congratulated upon your achievement in making available to modern westerners some of the rich store of social literature of the ancients.—J. O. HERTZLER, *Chairman, Department of Sociology, The University of Neraska.*

This volume is destined to have wide use by students of history, sociology, and religion. It will be appreciated by cultivated students generally, being the best codified statement of an old and significant tradition that has betrayed better continuity than any other, perhaps, in the world. It is of great importance to every student who wishes to catch history in the making. Dr. Motwani is exceptionally well fitted to interpret that set of documents.—EDWIN D. STARBUCK, *Professor of Philosophy, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.*

I have read your book *Manu* and think highly of it. It has always seemed to me that there was much in Oriental thought which we in America could appropriate into our own philosophical ideas. You have done a real service to both philosophy and scholarship in publishing your researches.—BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH, *Chairman, Department of Political Science, The State University of Iowa; Past President, American Political Science Association.*

He has utilised his understanding of American social thought and institutions in his study of the Hindu social thought, and his book will be

## OPINIONS

valuable in our libraries, and help us of the West to understand our brothers in the East.—F. C. ENSIGN, *School of Education, The State University of Iowa, Iowa*.

Both Mr. Aiyer<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Motwani treat of the ethical aspects of family and political organisation, of caste group, law, and many details of social life. . . . It is clear that the fundamental concept is that of society as an organism in which the rights and duties of the individuals vary in accordance with their place in the whole. The position is analogous in some respects to those of Plato and Bradley.—ALBAN G. WIDGERY, in *Philosophical Review*, U.S.A., page 318, May, 1936; Vol. XLV, No. 3.

Dr. Motwani has paid an unusual tribute to American sociology and sociologists in this successful attempt to correlate American sociological thought with that of ancient Hindu thought as expressed in the Code of Manu. . . . there are many parallelisms between American sociological thought and Hindu social thought. Much that passes for modernity in our own writings has already the mark of antiquity upon it. No sociologists can afford to miss reading this account of Dr. Motwani's, for it is revelatory and enlightening.—M. J. VINCENT, *Sociology and Social Research, University of Southern California*, p. 395, March-April, 1935.

### INDIA

This is a front rank book, on account of its substance and the manner of its presentation. The author is evidently an expert in sociological knowledge, able to grasp the Code of Manu as a whole and to see the bearing of each verse upon the rest of the Code, the result being a rare elucidation of the correspondences and relations of the various elements of the social scheme. It is quite the best exposition of Manu's system that I have yet seen. The author is able to go to every point directly, and to say what he means without any superfluity of words. . . . The whole forms not only a valuable summary of ancient social theory, but also a very useful handbook for the modern sociologist of every part of the world.—PROFESSOR ERNEST WOOD, author of *An Englishman Defends Mother India*.

We are indebted to Dr. Motwani for his acute analysis of the Dharma Shastra which, according to him, does not stand for social conflict but is quite consistent with wise and timely change. . . . We are indebted to Dr. Motwani for his thesis, which is ably supported, that Manu's varna dharma was not based on a theory of checks and balances, but also on the claims to equality of opportunities where the rewards are according to usefulness of the group and personal capacity. . . . As a contribution to what Dr. Motwani terms the "theory of the United States of Social Federalism," I welcome the publication of the enlarged edition of this study and wish the author all success in his most laudable endeavour to dispel misconceptions

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<sup>1</sup> Aiyar, Sir S. P. Sivaswamy, *Evolution of Hindu Morals, Kamala Lectures*, Calcutta University.

## OPINIONS

and to reconcile the wisdom of antiquity with the claims of the present and the future.—SIR C. P. RAMASWAMY Aiyar, *Pro-Chancellor, University of Travancore.*

Dr. Motwani is endowed with the gift of synthesising his thought and putting it in pithy, short sentences that sound like sutras. . . . I shall look forward to Dr. Motwani's comparative study of the Hindu and American social thought with great interest. I congratulate you and Dr. Motwani on bringing out this book which, I am sure, will occupy a place of prominence in our national literature.—DR. G. SRINIVASA MURTI, *Director, Adyar Library, Madras.*

I have gone through your valuable contribution on *Manu* with great pleasure and interest. You have rendered a great service to India as well as to the West by having interpreted the social ideas of the ancient Seer, on which the structure of the Hindu society is based. There was a very great need of this work, and I am very glad to say that you have fulfilled it in a very satisfactory manner.—B. L. ATREYA, *Professor of Psychology and Indian Philosophy, Benares Hindu University.*

To all observers the clear exposition contained in this introduction to *Manu* may be recommended. For it is a commentary on to-day. —HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON, *The Aryan Path, January, 1935.*

Indeed, Mr. Motwani's manner of approaching his subject is entirely original and reflects the highest credit on his grasp of the fundamentals of *Manu's* outline of planned human evolution. . . . He is merely interested in interpreting correctly the outlines as well as implications of *Manu's* scheme of a planned society and we must say that he has succeeded very remarkably in his task. Dr. Motwani deserves to be heartily congratulated for placing this lucid study of the ancient Hindu social theory in the hands of students of sociology. An appendix dealing with the chronology of Sanskrit literature upto the time of Megasthenes, and a Bibliography, are included in the work, which will be found very helpful to the reader.—*Bombay Chronicle, Bombay*

The author is to be congratulated on bringing out a treatise like the present one. It is a lucid presentation of a complete and consistent theory of social institutions conceived not from any exclusive point of view, materialistic, biological, institutionalistic or ideological. The author is a pioneer in the field and has given a clear exposition of the principles of sociology as found in *Manu's Code* in a telling manner.—*The Hindu, Madras.*

In "*Manu*" we find a book that, as the author points out, is really "*A Study in Hindu Social Thought.*" The author is an American-taught product, and in his book his love for India and his academic training in America seem to be fighting for mastery. . . . The *Code of Manu* is an encyclopædia of social knowledge, and the author, in his "*Manu*," has tried to explain and harness the ancient Logos with the teachings of modern thinkers on this

## OPINIONS

interesting and highly useful subject. We have not the least hesitation in recommending the book to all those who are interested in social subjects.  
—*Sanj Vertman, Bombay.*

For a study of the Code of Manu one may turn to Dr. Motwani's work. It is a very able exposition of the Hindu social theory outlined in the Manu Smriti or the Code of Manu, and is written in terms familiar to the student of sociology. It also endeavours to estimate, incidentally, India's contribution in the realm of thought. . . . Dr. Motwani has very ably outlined the main principles of Manu's social theory in the scientific terminology of to-day, and his is a pioneer attempt in this respect. And the final chapter deserves particular mention, for it shows, for the first time, that the Hindu social theory does not make for a facile fatalism, and that it indeed does contemplate social progress.—*The Times of India, Bombay.*

It is a model of concise and logical presentation, and is quite the clearest exposition of Hindu belief that we have had the privilege of reading. . . . We sincerely hope that Dr. Motwani will remember his promise to write, if need be, a fully comparative study.—*The Madras Mail, Madras.*

### ENGLAND

This is an effort, written in lucid and agreeable style, to present to American instructors in Sociology the bulky contents of the work known as the Laws of Manu as a "social theory in the scientific terminology of to-day" . . . His book is both informative and interesting.—C. A. F. RHYDS DAVIDS, *Philosophy*, p. 494, October, 1936, Vol. XI, No. 44.

### UNIVERSITY OF CEYLON

He writes therefore with authority and what he says should serve as an eye-opener to those in Ceylon who are inclined to take a complacent view of the problems of the coming University. . . . Here is a book that gives many ideas and knocks down a few which we have tenaciously held."—*Ceylon Daily News.*

He strikes home to the builders and upholders of the present day civilization a few truths that deserve well to be taken into account. —*The Mahabodhi Society Journal, Calcutta.*

Dr. Kewal Motwani's book on the University of Ceylon is full of concrete suggestions as to what the University of Ceylon should be, its work, its curriculum, its departments, its constitution, its boards and examinations. No one interested in the Ceylon University should fail to read this book.—*Young Ceylon, Colombo.*

In this thought-provoking and stimulus-providing book, the author discusses fairly fully the task, the work and the problems before the University of Ceylon. It seems profitable to follow his arguments and to measure up to his criticisms and to consider his suggestions. Friendly



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critics should not be despised. Kewal Motwani breathes a sincere love for Ceylon. Let us weigh his words of advice, caution and encouragement. It will save us much heart-burning and more repentance later. A perusal . . . shows the author as a practical idealist. He is constructive, suggestive and comforting. Every educationist, publicist and student in Ceylon should read this book and be convinced that the "whole significance of the University of Ceylon lies in the contribution it can make to synthesising the East and the West, to reconciling the claims of the wisdom of the past with the demands of the present and the future. In rendering such service to the citizen and to the nation shall lie the cinsummation of the University's being."—*Young Ceylon, Colombo*.

He is therefore quite in a good position to speak on the subject which is being discussed to-day. . . . The learned lecturer has hinted upon many an important phases of University education in general and that in the east in particular.—*University of Benares Journal*.

I have read your book with immense delight. It is very thoughtful and the suggestions there are fully deserving of earnest consideration. I am circulating it among my friends here.—V. S. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR, *Former Registrar, University of Mysore*.

Couched in elegant language, deserves to be read by all interested in education.—*The Scholar, Palghat*.

In the first part, Dr. Motwani takes a rapid survey of the world and its problems and tries to fit Ceylon into the general scheme of things. He touches on the various influences which have been at work moulding the life and character of the people. In the second part he takes up the question of the University and indicates the directions in which it should promote the cultural progress of Ceylon.—*The Times of Ceylon, Colombo*.

## SCIENCE AND SOCIETY IN INDIA

(A series of lectures delivered at various Universities of India under auspices of the Indian Science Congress. 1944-45)

Dr. Motwani is a sound scholar, a very impressive lecturer and has deep insight into the ideals and achievements of India. . . . His lectures were much appreciated.—SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN, *Benares Hindu University*.

Your lectures have created a great impression in the Institute and our post-graduate students are taking a real interest in the subject.—SIR J. C. GHOSH, *Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore*.

These lectures were both erudite and informative and were greatly appreciated by large audiences . . . has a lucid and clear style of lecturing.—SIR C. P. RAMASWAMY AIYAR, *University of Travancore*.

## OPINIONS

Dr. Motwani was successful in creating a considerable interest in the subjects of his lectures both among the students and the public of Nagpur. Our University is grateful to the Indian Science Congress for sending Dr. Motwani to us to give such an intellectual fare.—JUSTICE W. R. PURANIK, *Vice-Chancellor, Nagpur University.*

Dr. Motwani deserves the thanks of everybody for bringing forward the significance of Sociology in India's present era of planning and reconstruction. He has a keen and alert mind, observant of all social facts and changes that he can also bring into an integrated whole for interpretation and forecast.—RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE, *University of Lucknow.*

The lectures provide a valuable survey of the problem of science and its relation to society.—D. S. KOTHARI, *Dean, Faculty of Science, Delhi University.*

I have arranged for adequate number of copies of the book to be put in circulation among my colleagues and the Secretaries to the Government of this Province. I believe every one who has anything to do with national planning should acquaint himself intimately with Dr. Motwani's point of view.—HONOURABLE MUKHI GOBINDRAM, *Minister, Reconstruction Department, Government of Sind.*

In the different Universities, Dr. Motwani's lectures have been much applauded. Dr. Motwani, in these pages, reveals an original and stimulating line of thought.—*The Forum, Bombay.*

To my mind, it seems that no other Indian thinker of our times is likely to deal with these subjects any better than Dr. Motwani. For its copiousness of information, scholarly background and lucidity of presentation, I would almost say that it is a rare book of its kind, thoughtful and interesting, line by line.—*The Whip, Calcutta.*

The book is timely and thought-provoking.—*The Vedanta Kesari, Madras.*

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